Football World Cup

Dross turns into gold for France



Ground down . . . Paraguay's keeper Chilavert is distraught after his team were knocked out of the tounament PHOTO: TOM JENKINS

Richard Williams in Lens

EVERY World Cup has to have at least one real stinker of a match. This was it, unhappily for the people of France, who had to suffer agonies of embarrassment as their team flapped and floundered through to the last eight with an extraordinarily inept victory over the unconsidered men of Paraguay.

A sudden-death goal in the second period of extra-time, scored by the veteran stopper Laurent Blanc, put an end to the goalless misery. After this painful affair the host nation's representatives will have to do something very special to rebuild their credibility, and perhaps their self-belief. Since their quarter-final finds them opposed by Italy, the task might not be within their abilities, even though they will welcome back the inspiration of Zinedine Zidane, absent last Sunday through suspension.

Thirty years ago France met Paraguay in the World Cup and beat them 7-3. Just Fontaine scored a hat-trick, prompted by the genius of Raymond Kopa. Here, just a couple of goalkicks away from the mining village where Kopa was born, France again beat Paraguay, but their victory came at the end of a performance that did no honour to the tradition of French football.

Never was the term "golden goal" less appropriate. The 32-year-old Blanc, whose overall performance was beyond reproach, will receive his nation's gratitude for maintaining the team's presence in the competition; the rest of us were merely relieved that he brought an end to this dreadful match, so bad that recent converts to the New Football will have had their enthusiasm severely tested.

After notching nine goals in their three group matches France may have thought their well-publicised scoring problems were over. Paraguay taught them otherwise, with a performance that was like something discovered in a time capsule buried in South America 30 years ago.

Their coach, Paulo Cesar Carpegiani, is a Brazilian but he appears to brainwash his team with old videos of Estudiantes de la Plata and Boca Juniors, from the days of maximum cynicism. Paraguay showed the full repertoire of time-wasting practices, with particular emphasis on long-range back-passes, exaggerated delays at free-kicks, play-acting after fouls real and imaginary, and general all-round sulking.

The plan was obvious. If they could keep France at bay for 90 minutes, and then do it again in extra-time, they would be able to take their chances with the penalty shoot-out, during which their nerves would probably be in better shape than those of players burdened by the home crowd's expectations.

The French response was nothing short of pitiful. Their defenders, as usual, erected a forbidding barrier. The forwards, however, were ponderous in movement, imprecise in execution and almost devoid of guile. And they made a hash of every chance or half-chance that came to them until Blanc, in his 71st international, succeeded where his colleagues had failed.

Also through to the last eight are Denmark, who ended the African dream by thrashing Nigeria 4-1. So much for Pele's prophecy that an African nation would win the World Cup by 2000.

The Nigerians came into this match as hot favourites to set up a return match of the 1996 Olympic Games semi-final with Brazil, which Nigeria won. Instead and probably to Brazil's relief, it is the Danes who meet the world champions in Nantes on Friday, with a place in the last four at stake. Then again, Brazil have lost to the only other Scandinavians in the tournament, Norway.

But Africa's challenge for the championship has expired just at the moment we were expecting Nigeria to breathe vivid life into it. The reason was a brilliant performance from the Danish side.

The look on Brian Laudrup's face said all that was needed about his side's thrilling, astonishing match in Paris. Only 11 minutes had gone and Laudrup had just side-footed the Danes two in front. He ran to the touchline to celebrate, his face was a picture of delirious disbelief.

The Danes, playing with slickness and power, did not stop there. They added another two before Jay-Jay Okocha could lead his teammates in the expected African dance. But it was too late. The supposed heavyweights were floored and out.

"It was amazing and we are drinking champagne tonight," said Bo Johansson, the Denmark coach. "It was a fantastic performance and we can go all the way now. Brin[illegible] Brazil. They are the best team in[illegible] world but we will give them a [illegible] game. I look forward to it. It w[illegible] fantastic."

Brazil beat Chile in Paris 4-1 [illegible] two goals each from Cesar Sa[illegible] and Ronaldo. Marcelo Salas s[illegible] the Chileans' only goal. In M[illegible]seille, Italy continued their prog[illegible] by seeing off Norway 1-0, Chris[illegible] Vieri registering his fifth goal of [illegible] tournament for the *Azzurri*.

In Montpellier, Germany c[illegible] from behind to defeat Mexico. After Luis Hernandez had put [illegible] Mexicans in front early in [illegible] second half, Berti Vogts's t[illegible] came back strongly and an opp[illegible]tunist strike from Jürgen Klins[illegible] and a header from Oliver Biet[illegible] secured them a quarter-final against either Croatia or Romania.

Holland, 2-1 winners [illegible] Yugoslavia, had Edgar Davids [illegible] thank for an injury time winner [illegible] Toulouse. Guus Hiddink's men [illegible]peared in control at half-time [illegible] Dennis Bergkamp had given t[illegible] the lead, but their opponents [illegible] back swiftly after the break w[illegible] header from Slobodan Komljeno[illegible]

Predrag Mijatovic then wast[illegible] chance to put Yugoslavia in f[illegible] from the penalty spot and D[illegible] made him pay the ultimate p[illegible] Holland take on either Engla[illegible] Argentina next.

England put their camp[illegible] firmly back on track with a 2-0 [illegible]tory over Colombia in Lens. G[illegible] from Darren Anderton and D[illegible] Beckham took Glenn Hoddle's [illegible] into the knockout stage in style.

But for Scotland there was [illegible] such luck. Craig Brown's men w[illegible] knocked out of the compet[illegible] when they went down 3-0 to [illegible]rocco in their final group game [illegible] Etienne.

Cryptic crossword by Janus

Across

1 Sporting fixtures the devious may consider movable (9)
6 Leave out decoration on object (4)
10 Test to discover content of cracker (5)
11 Insect of help on sea trip (9)
12 Authority providing pass badly torn inside (7)
13 Criminal bringing crowds to island (7)
14 Agreeing with special reporter (13)
17 Rave about material couturier gives pub landlady (4,9)
21 Last sea to be featured in map collections (7)
22 One who interferes with fruit, it is said (7)
24 Bird-scarer accepting sliding fee as royal bodyguard (9)
25 An actor's clubs (5)
26 A psychic phenomenon rejected by part of church (4)
27 Count palatine's friend's final destination (9)

Down

1 Wild animals turn up to see belligerent bird (8)
2 Historian who had to continue performing? (5)
3 Owners installing one with proper locks (14)
4 Boat that has provoked head-turning (7)
5 He may not stick around long when the heat is on (7)
7 Met role model on motorway with car accessory (9)
8 Tipsy saint taking first evening drink (6)
9 Composition reached by the honeymakers' union (3,4,7)
15 Arms in continuous circulation? (9)
16 Hypocritical person's easier hire purchase arrangement (8)
18 Appropriate site for scholastic publisher (7)
19 Doctor in clear over butcher's hook (7)
20 Explorer's vestment found inside snake (6)
23 Bathroom feature for when footballers go to the toilet (5)

Last week's solution

BREADAND PATTER
I Q I O R U E
REGRETTED CODES
D S S F Y A O I
RECONSIDERED
B A L R F I K E
LICE OBJURATION
A Q S U N N N C
COUNTERACT OGRE
K I A N T B S S
MERETRICIOUS
A A U N O T S L
RABAT GENITALIA
I L E A E A D
AVERSE FLORIDLY

Motor Racing French Grand Prix

Coulthard pays price for fuel

Alan Henry at Magny Cours

DAVID COULTHARD'S World Championship prospects sustained a potentially crippling broadside in the French Grand Prix here at the Circuit de Nevers last Sunday when a succession of technical hitches while refuelling his McLaren-Mercedes relegated him from what might have been a strong second place to a distant sixth at the end.

The race saw Michael Schumacher and Eddie Irvine post Ferrari's first one-two since Alain Prost and Nigel Mansell dominated the podium in the 1990 Spanish Grand Prix at Jerez.

Coulthard, who had hoped to kick-start his faltering championship campaign with a win, ran fourth until his first pit stop on lap 22 when there was a major problem with a refuelling rig, which meant he resumed off the pace.

Three more similarly frustrating stops on laps 55, 56 and 63 of the 71-lap race dropped him to eighth. Yet he re-took sixth from Jean Alesi's Sauber on his last lap to claim the final point of the day, following his teammate Mika Hakkinen's third, Jacques Villeneuve's fourth for Williams and Alexander Wurz's fifth for Benetton.

The race did not pass without controversy, as the initial start was aborted after Jos Verstappen — making a Formula One return for the Stewart-Ford team — stalled on the grid.

Unfortunately, the red starting lights were switched a fraction of a second too late to the flashing orange which signals the cars to stop, and Hakkinen's McLaren surged away into the lead. The field was signalled to a halt at the end of that lap, after which the Finn squandered his pole advantage by making a poor getaway and allowing Schumacher to carve out a commanding lead.

While the German pulled clear of the field Irvine efficiently fulfilled his subservient role to keep the McLarens bottled up in third and fourth places. This was a crucial opening phase of the race, which allowed Schumacher to build up a 14-second cushion before making his first refuelling stop after lap 22.

Thereafter he was able to control the race with absolute assurance, confident in the knowledge that Irvine had Hakkinen well under control. When the Finn emerged from his second refuelling stop on lap 54, after a brief stint in second place, Irvine re-took the position that he sustained right through to the finish.

© Guardian Publications Ltd., 1998. Published by Guardian Publications Ltd., 164 Deansgate, Manchester, M60 2RR, and printed by WCP Commercial Printing, Leek.
Second class postage paid at New York, N.Y., and mailing offices, Registered as a newspaper at the Post Office.

The Guardian Weekly
Vol 159, No 2
Week ending July 12, 1998
The Washington Post · Le Monde

Orange Order officials come up against barricades in Drumcree last Sunday PHOTO: CRISPIN RODWELL

Ulster faces roadblock to peace

John Mullin

LOYALIST protesters last Sunday barricaded dozens of roads in Belfast with blazing vehicles after Orangemen were blocked from walking their traditional route back into Portadown, County Armagh, following an annual church service at nearby Drumcree.

More than 1,400 Portadown Orangemen camped outside Drumcree church. They vowed to stay there until they are allowed to march down the nationalist Garvaghy Road, their traditional route since 1807. Hundreds more joined them later in the day. They said they would stay for as long as it took.

On Monday the Parades Commission, which had banned the march from the Garvaghy Road, tried to take the sting out of the crisis by announcing that Orangemen are to be allowed to march through a nationalist area in Belfast next week.

The announcement came as Tony Blair prepared to meet Orange Order leaders in an effort to end the stand-off at the Co Armagh church, where protesters were blockaded with trenches and barbed wire.

Alistair Graham, chairman of the Parades Commission, said that the Ballynafeigh lodge in south Belfast would be allowed to parade down the Lower Ormeau Road. The commission banned the three previous marches there and the Orange Order voluntarily abandoned its annual parade on July 12 last year to defuse tension.

Mr Graham said: "We recognise the very deep sense of hurt that exists in the Orange community. We are trying to show that, just as we wanted to break the cycle as far as Drumcree is concerned, we think it sensible to break the cycle on Lower Ormeau Road."

On Monday all public transport in Northern Ireland was cancelled. In Belfast cars were hijacked and police were fired upon. Barricades were set alight, dozens of roads were blocked, police stations were attacked and there was rioting in several towns.

The Parades Commission ruled that 17 of 28 Orange marches next week should be re-routed or restricted.

The Ulster Unionist party leader, David Trimble, whose Upper Bann constituency includes Portadown, stayed away from the town last Sunday in the face of anger surrounding his role in negotiating the Good Friday deal, which is seen by most Orangemen as a sell-out.

Orange Order leaders, while appealing for protests to be peaceful, have implemented a campaign of civil disobedience. Their aim is to force the Government to reverse the ban.

The army and police staged a huge security operation to block the Orangemen as they left Drumcree church. They are hoping to avoid a repeat of 1996, when the Royal Ulster Constabulary was forced to reverse a similar ban after five days of loyalist violence.

Up to 30,000 army and police were on standby throughout Northern Ireland on Tuesday, anticipating a long-running game of cat and mouse. Security forces fear that dissident loyalists will resort to violence.

Last year the march was allowed to go down the Garvaghy Road. Ronnie Flanagan, RUC chief constable, felt it was the less dangerous option, but nationalist residents were enraged, and rioting flared across Northern Ireland.

Asia's masses shift against the West

COMMENT
Martin Woollacott

WHEN New York Times correspondent Hallett Abend first arrived in Beijing in 1926 he told the United States minister there that he planned to stay in Asia six months or so "until affairs out here finally settle down".

Abend later wrote that the American diplomat laughed for a long time in a "disconcerting" way, and then suggested that if he wished to stay until affairs settled down he had better buy a plot of land for his tomb outside the city and begin "adorning it by planting pines and willow trees".

There are other similarities between the situation in eastern Asia in the period between the two world wars and the situation now, since the economic crisis began with the Thai currency's problems last year. Politically, China is moving into a closer relationship with Western countries, as the Kuomintang did in the thirties, while Japan is somewhat isolated, although clearly not to the same degree. The economic difficulties of East and Southeast Asian countries have caused, in some cases, damage on the same scale as the Great Depression, with the difference that these modern societies are more vulnerable to the effects.

Worse may be to come. International attempts to resolve the crisis have been less than successful, with many people believing that the thrust of such attempts has made things worse. Economic troubles are bringing to the fore leaders more responsive to the needs of ordinary folk; but they are also, as then, encouraging nationalism, a tendency toward protectionism and a mentality that senses international conspiracy behind national difficulties.

The shift in political rhetoric is towards the people. Joseph Estrada, the new president of the Philippines, said in his inaugural speech: "This is the dawning of a new day, the day of the Filipino masses. One of their own is finally leading them . . . It's time to speed up the improvement of the living conditions of the common people. Must we always measure progress by the golf courses built for the rich?"

Similar sentiments have been expressed by the new Thai, South Korean and Indonesian leaders. The darker side of the populist tilt is seen when leaders such as Mahathir Mohamad in Malaysia imply that Asian economies have been deliberately destroyed by speculators and by Western capitalists, and even governments. "We are pushed to become a backward, weak race that is recolonised and having to serve others," Mahathir said at the recent conference of the Malaysian ruling party.

Asian politicians are using the forces of nationalism to deflect criticism and divert the anger, real or potential, of populations that are already suffering greatly and will almost certainly suffer more in the future. During Bill Clinton's visit to China, Jiang Zemin took the calculated risk of allowing public debate on Tiananmen and on democracy because, it may be argued, he thought Chinese resistance to being told what to do by outsiders would balance popular doubts about the party's policies.

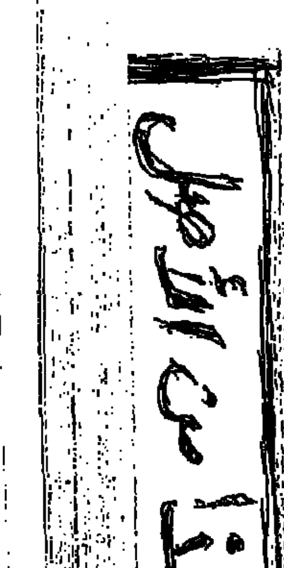
The little book that caused controversy in Japan a few years ago, The Japan That Can Say No, which was mainly about standing up to the

continued on page 4

Setting sun, page 13
Washington Post, page 17

Army chief hits out at Netanyahu 4
Fascists by any other name 5
Learning to love stress 27

Austria	AS30	Malta	50c
Belgium	BF80	Netherlands	G 5
Denmark	DK17	Norway	NK 16
Finland	FM 10	Portugal	E300
France	FF 14	Saudi Arabia	SR 6.60
Germany	DM 4	Spain	P 300
Greece	DR 600	Sweden	SK 19
Italy	L 3,500	Switzerland	SF 3.80



Europe's last gasp

Norman Stone

The Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century
by Mark Mazower
Allen Lane 496pp £20

"*WE ARE* only capable of the highest degree of mediocrity," said a German lady at an Anglo-German event in Essen some years ago. I dissented. When you see how the Germans have made a go of rust-belt Essen, and the Ruhr in general, and compare it with the near ruin of our Sheffields, you only wish that the British might have a slice of their mediocrity.

There must have been quite a bit of to-ing and fro-ing in the run-up to the Blair victory between British Labour and the German Social Democrats, because the British seem to have adopted quite a number of things (the federalisation process in Scotland and Wales is an obvious one) that are associated with Germany's post-war success. However, Germans are not really very happy about their own performance; they moan. Many of them even say that eighties Britain, for all its problems, had something to teach them about creativity.

Europe today is rich, but rich in the way pensioners are rich, ringing up the stockbroker while complaining about ailments and the noisiness of grandchildren. It is very, very difficult to make an interesting book about the continent's politics, and if the author's perspective is centre-left, you are in for an unremitting diet of worthy muesli. It is altogether remarkable that Mark Mazower, one of Britain's brightest young historians, has managed to write about this subject in such a way that you want to turn the pages, and on the way learn about all sorts of odd things.

Mazower started off with a wonderful book about the Greek resistance to German occupation and the run-up to the Greek civil war. It was a romantic late-sixties sort of book in its approach, but it led the author to see the severe limitations of communism. I have often noticed that lapsed "Euro-communists" with a southern, Mediterranean perspective write rather interestingly about modern Europe; they understand what it is about and where the real power lies. This book is really an essay, though one very cleverly wrapped into a chronological account, about the understanding of 20th century Europe — the victory of a sort of Americanised, middle-of-the-road western Europe over communism, which, for the first part of the post-war period, did appear to be a serious competitor.

The real spectre in western Europe, says Mazower, was not communism at all, but fascism. Fascism has far deeper roots in European history. It was not a distortion of "capitalism", but had its own economic approach, much of it socialist. In the thirties, the liberal world-order collapsed with the Depression, and, as any historian has to do, Mazower puts the post-war economic miracle of Europe in that perspective.

I wonder if he is right in claiming that the Depression showed the failure of liberal economics, however. After all, Britain herself recovered quite quickly, despite legend, and if American bankers had got their sums right the whole business need not have been anything like so bad. As you look at the history of "capitalism" over the past century and a half, it is the Depression that looks anomalous, not the booms.

Mazower is challenging about the role of fascism in the European past, and here he makes me think quite hard. It is certainly embarrassing to find modern goody-goody Europe ticking off countries such as Turkey for bad behaviour, whereas, easily within living memory, the western Europeans, Germans in the lead, were shovelling minorities into camps and claiming the authority of their own history as justification. In non-European eyes, the western Europeans' craven behaviour over Bosnia was just a continuation of these practices, by Serbian proxy, and it cost dozens more times the casualties incurred in Turkey's war



The Berlin Wall, 1962; from Henri Cartier-Bresson's Europeans (Thames and Hudson, £29.95)

(one supported by many Kurds) against the terroristic PKK.

Mazower looks for signs of a return of fascism in modern Europe — not the discredited thirties version, but a more up-to-date, anti-immigrant one. Here, he is quite reassuring: no reason for panic. Europe has solved its problems of the past, is now prosperous and not very important.

As history, Mazower's book is valuable and well written, and I was particularly grateful for the bibliographical pages. So much history gets written nowadays, and we are so swamped in material about, say, the workings of the Marshall Plan, that the bibliography in itself is a useful exercise. However, this is a history book for the present: it makes you think about the relationship of economic progress, social conservatism and authoritarian government. If there is a serious slump in Europe in the near future, as so many people foresee, it will be worth keeping a copy of Mazower as a guide, maybe indirect but always interesting, as to what might come.

If you would like to order this book at the special price of £17 contact CultureShop (see page 29)

Take a ride with a Havana cowboy

Nicholas Blincoe

Cuba Libre
by Elmore Leonard
Viking 343pp £16.99

Sunset Limited
by James Lee Burke
Orion 312pp £16.99

ELMORE LEONARD and James Lee Burke are the kind of crime writers who tend to be credited with "transcending" the genre. Whether this transcendence takes the form of an Hegelian synthesis or a theological assumption, I do not know. It is a peculiar thing to say about a crime novelist; they are always the most unidealistic and secular writers around.

If anything — to replace a vertical metaphor with a horizontal one — Elmore Leonard has expanded rather than transcended the genre. He reinvigorated crime writing with his trademark colloquial style – and in the process became probably the most influential novelist of the past decade.

Which makes Cuba Libre something of a surprise because it is not a crime novel. It is not even a contemporary story. Set on the eve of the Spanish-American war of 1898, in the immediate aftermath of the sinking of the American battleship Maine in Havana harbour by the Spanish, it's the story of Ben Tyler, a man who sets off running guns to the Cuban rebels, gets arrested by the Spanish Guardia after a bar-room shoot-out, and finally escapes with the woman he loves.

Because Ben Tyler is a cowboy, Cuba Libre has been described as a western. Elmore Leonard wrote many westerns between the late fifties and the mid-seventies, both novels and screenplays, but Cuba Libre does not mark his return to the Wild Frontier.

Rather, it is a Boy's Own adventure and somehow, between The Count Of Monte Cristo and The Hunt For Red October, the adventure novel got too bottom-heavy to lend itself to Leonard's light and loose touch. The genre's defining motifs are a man-sized heroic tone and an unwieldy amount of technical data. Leonard parodies both these key ingredients in Cuba Libre. The epic tone comes courtesy of a journalist who retells key scenes in a ludicrously overblown style. The technical bumf comes via a young marine gunner, a survivor from the Maine, whose only topic of conversation is the weight and calibre of every gun on every warship in the US Navy.

Touches like this make Cuba Libre a highly intelligent book. And like vintage Elmore Leonard it is never less than enjoyable. But it is not a classic. Leonard has already overhauled two genres in his 40-year career. He is not going to be able to manage it a third time with the boy's own yarn.

Cuba Libre shares one thing with crime literature: it is an overtly political work, marking the centenary of Cuban-American poor relations. James Lee Burke's Sunset Limited proves exactly why the crime novel is essentially and inescapably political.

Sunset Limited is set in the familiar Burke landscape — New Orleans and the parishes of Iberia and St Mary's, Louisiana, in the bayous patrolled by Deputy Dave Robicheaux. The story revolves around the death, about 30 years previously, of a local union organiser. The man was chain-whipped and crucified by an alliance of business leaders and Klan thugs.

James Lee Burke writes novels that work like gumbo. He could successfully include anything in his stories; his ingredients are always so carefully simmered over such a long period. So in addition to the union leader, Sunset Limited has stories of racial exploitation going back to the days of slavery, and other betrayals and murders committed as far back as the American Civil War (which Burke always depicts from the perspective of the Confederacy).

And here Burke proves the edge the crime oeuvre has over other kinds of literature — that when the elements of the plot finally fall into place, the resolution is only ever a minor achievement. Robicheaux discovers the killers, certainly. But at no point does Burke ask the reader to believe in a bigger resolution.

There is no moment of transcendence; no Hegelian *aufhebung*, no assumption. Society remains as messy and complex as ever. But in Burke's secular, non-idealist vision; there is always room for a practical form of politics.

Paperbacks

Desmond Christy

Woody Guthrie: A Life, by Joe Klein (Faber, £9.99)

AND you thought Joe Klein only wrote political satire. Way back then, 1980 actually, he produced this reverential life of Woody Guthrie. The tragedy of Guthrie's life was that he found fame and fortune just as Huntington's chorea was claiming his body. Klein quotes his son Arlo: "I remember him coming home from the hospital and taking me out to the backyard, just him and me, and teaching me the last three verses to This Land Is Your Land, because he thinks that if I don't learn them, no one will remember." Since the song became a jingle for both United Airlines and Ford, he may have had a point.

The Forgotten Trade, by Nigel Tattersfield, with a foreword by John Fowles (Pimlico, £12.50)

TATTERSFIELD found the log of a slave ship on a bookstall. He presents that fascinating document here, along with an account of how profits rose and morals declined in small ports such as Deal and Lyme Regis. What appals Lyme Regis's most famous resident, John Fowles, is that all of those "pillars of nonconformist virtue should have failed so miserably and universally to realise the monstrous cruelty and injustice, the total denial of all Christian ... that poisoned their involvement in the slave trade".

William Shakespeare: The Quiz Book, compiled by Stanley Wells, illustrated by John Lawrence (Long Barn Books, £9.99)

BRUSH up your Shakespeare, but you'll need to know about his life, the history of his plays, performance and criticism, too. I thought I was doing quite well for a while, Wells being a kindly quiz-master, but the questions do become very testing. Fortunately, the answers are in the back of the book. Try this one: "An Indian boy is the cause of marital disagreement in which play?" I came close to Bottom on that one.

The Farewell Symphony, by Edmund White (Vintage, £6.99)

EDMUND White began his homoerotic record in A Boy's Own Story in 1982 and continued the story in 1988 with The Beautiful Room Is Empty. His first two books painted a vivid picture of the gay underworld where cruising, promiscuity, sado-masochism and brutality are played out against a backdrop of gay bars, bath houses and sex clubs. In The Farewell Symphony he shows us the dark side of the moon — revisiting his old haunts with the tragedy of hindsight, from the perspective of one who is HIV positive and whose lover is dying of Aids. —*Jane Roberts*

Difficult Daughters, by Manju Kapur (Faber and Faber, £9.99)

THE way we battle with our parents, and the ensuing soul-searching guilt, is the theme of Delhi-based lecturer Manju Kapur's first novel. Set in the time of Partition, Difficult Daughters tells the absorbing tale of Virmati, an Amritsar woman torn between family duty, the desire for education and the lure of illicit love. It is steeped in exquisite melancholy. —*JR*

Praise that isn't fulsome

Nicholas Lezard

The King's English
by Kingsley Amis
HarperCollins 270pp £6.99 pbk

JUST AS we now all know, thanks to Freud, that the criminal secretly wants to be caught, the pervert publicly humiliated and the cheat exposed, so the grammatical stickler and bore wants to be revealed as a sloppy user of English. Most [illegible] self included — think themselves pretty expert in the use of English, and pounce like leopards on others' solecisms. (It is also, I have discovered, a subject guaranteed to generate the largest possible reader response — even when the readers are agreeing with me.)

So how did I feel when I saw, in this modern-day addendum to Fowler's Modern English Usage, Amis's entries for "Fulsome", "Pristine", and "Transpire", pointing out that they all meant something different from what it was I thought they meant before? (My apologies. When one has the shade of Kingsley Amis standing over one's shoulder, as it were, when writing about grammar, one is liable to come unstuck rather badly out of sheer panic. Like what I am doing now.) Pretty sick, that's how. But there is too much good humour here for it to leave you feeling bad for long. (Jesus Christ, just about every sentence of mine in this review now seems atrociously constructed.)

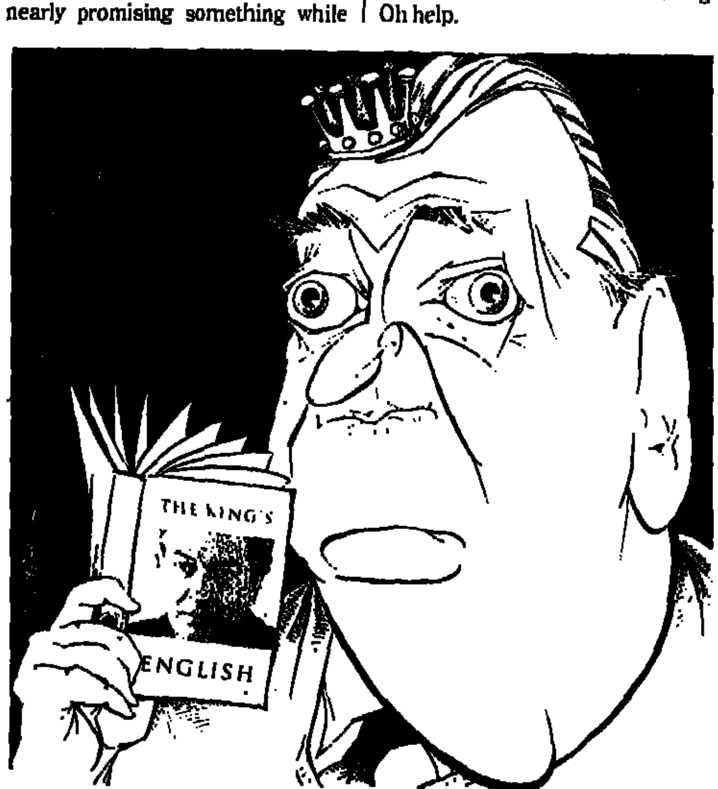
Advice for those who know that "data" is a plural noun: "The best solution is to avoid using any form of the word while enjoying a comfortable little thrill of superiority whenever a singular use is spotted." On accentuation: "I ask for Glenmorangie malt whisky stressing the third syllable of the name, even though I happen to know the head man there stresses the second, because a rational being prefers being understood, and served, to being right."

On those who forget that French is a creolised Latin pidgin: "The language of Racine and Voltaire took its first steps not in any perfumed court or candle-lit cloister but in the lee of some rain-soaked dunghill." Or, on "Disinterested": "The most famous and ancient of all misuses and not for that reason any less a case of ignorant bullshit."

The book is, in short, a useful delight all the way through. *Decus et tutamen*, indeed, if I may rattle his shade by being over-Latinate. For Amis is robust, sensible and almost entirely correct; I gasped as he ditched "whom" as a usable word, and cheered as he struck off "hopefully": "puts on a false show of nearly promising something while actually saying precious little. A favourite with politicians and even more with publishers."

All in all, hours of fun. This was his last book, and it's a beautiful valediction; it is also very nice (and a subliminal aid to pleasure) that the cover photograph of Amis shows him as a rather dashingly handsome young man, and not the pop-eyed sclerotic picture editors foisted upon us in his later years.

I wonder whether this has anything to do with the fact that the person who [illegible] this book's joys was, in fact, a friend who is young enough to use, with impunity, the word "wicked" when you or I would say "jolly good". Which says something about this book's cross-generational appeal. *Quod erat demonstrandum*. Or something. Oh help.



Lost and found and lost again

William Fiennes

Chronicle of the Guayaki Indians
by Pierre Clastres
translated by Paul Auster
Faber 349pp £9.99

BORGES liked to begin his fictions with the discovery of a lost manuscript or obscure work of literature. So when the eminently Borgesian Paul Auster describes how a little-known masterpiece of French anthropology fell into his hands, how he translated it, how his translation was lost and salvaged by "a passionate collector of books", one's first thought is: he's making it up.

It only takes a few pages of Chronicle Of The Guayaki Indians for such suspicions to be dispelled. Clastres was the real thing — a serious academic anthropologist who lived among the Guayaki of Paraguay in 1963 and 1964, and who collected his observations of the tribe in a book which Auster translated in the 1970s. It wasn't a happy endeavour. Auster was so broke at the time that he could not even afford to photocopy his manuscript. In 1977 Clastres was killed in a car accident, just as the English version of his Chronicle was due to appear in the United States. Auster's publisher went bust. His manuscript went missing.

Then came the magical restoration. In October 1996 a bibliophile approached Auster at a book signing in San Francisco carrying a set of bound galleys — the proofs of the translation Auster had produced 20 years before. Here was Clastres's account of the Guayaki, which describes how the forest Indians came into increasing contact with the white Paraguayans settling on the savannahs. The Paraguayans had guns, and in the 1950s the Guayaki found themselves under attack. The demand for slaves was high; hunters like Pinchin Lopez could sell them for one cow or one good horse apiece.

Unable to live as fugitives, they surrendered to a Paraguayan farmer in 1959 and settled at Arroyo Moroti in what was effectively a reservation. The previously nomadic Guayaki had finally settled at a permanent camp, which meant that they could be studied. Clastres heard about them, learned as much as he could of their language by listening to tapes, and set off for Paraguay.

Auster declares that Clastres "writes with the cunning of a good novelist", but Chronicle remains a work of anthropology. The more Clastres analyses their rituals, the more he admires the Guayaki. He explains that every aspect of the tribe's behaviour shows an awareness that "an underlying brotherhood binds the world and men together and that what happens among men is echoed in the world".

One day Clastres listens to a banal conversation between the chief and his wife. Suddenly, he realises that instead of talking, they are whistling to one another, and that the whistling, like whale song, has timbres, inflections and cadences that convey meaning. That admiration is not tempered when Clastres discovers that they are cannibals. They do not eat the living, only the dead, turning themselves into "living cemeteries".

When Clastres arrived the Guayaki numbered 100. "An entire continent," he wrote, "will soon be rid of its first inhabitants." They are now extinct. This may be the only memorial to "their piety, the gravity of their presence in the world of things and the world of beings".

A force for good in a world where evil rules

Amanda Foreman

Dunant's Dream: War, Switzerland and the History of the Red Cross
by Caroline Moorehead
HarperCollins 716pp £25

DUNANT'S Dream is the story of the Red Cross, or more accurately two stories about the Red Cross. One is about its vision, humanity, generosity and courage. The other is about its complacency, timidity, officiousness and arrogance. As Caroline Moorehead says in her preface, the 125-year history of the Red Cross, though a proud one on the whole, is marred by one terrible failure, its silence over the Nazi concentration camps.

Dunant's Dream is not only the first full-scale history of the Red Cross in the English language, it is also the first to have benefited from open access to Red Cross and Eastern Bloc files. The result is a balanced, moving and utterly absorbing account of how high the human spirit can soar, and the depths to which it can sink.

The Red Cross is not a single entity. There is the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), based in Geneva, which supervises wartime activities and is the guardian of the Geneva Convention. Its ruling body, the Committee, consists of just 25 Swiss citizens (as has been the case since 1875), who have ultimate authority over all national Red Cross societies. But there is also the younger League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, also based in Geneva since 1934, which provides aid during civilian disasters. To complicate matters, the two umbrella organisations have been mutually suspicious, if not hostile, towards each other for years. The competition between them for publicity and funds remains intense.

A Swiss businessman named Henri Dunant came up with the idea of the Red Cross in 1859. He was in Italy, desperately seeking the patronage of Napoleon III to prevent his Algerian enterprise from sinking, when he stumbled on the battle of Solferino. Shocked and horrified by the carnage about him, Dunant devoted himself to the care of the wounded. On his return to Switzerland he wrote a best-selling memoir about his experiences. His ardour inspired a small group of rich and pious Swiss businessmen to join him in creating an international organisation for the care of wounded soldiers.

As a result of Dunant's efforts, 1864 witnessed not only the formation of the International Committee for the Relief of Military Wounded, but also the Geneva International Conference, which produced the Geneva Convention.

As is so often the case with great visionaries, Dunant started the Red Cross, but did not enjoy the fruits of his hard work. Dunant's unstable personality, combined with his disastrous business ventures, led to his being disgraced and expelled from the organisation. Those that took over, however, were efficient and dedicated, and the Red Cross went into the first world war with more than 40 years of field experience behind it. Two aspects of the Red Cross's history stand out at this point; the first is the bravery and enthusiasm of women volunteers, from ex-debutantes to former typists, who risked their lives to bring food and medical supplies to dangerous areas. The other is the inventiveness and sensitivity of the Red Cross in its care for prisoners of war.

As the role of the Red Cross developed and expanded during the war, so did its reputation for neutrality and incorruptibility. But inside the organisation there were fierce debates about the Red Cross's reliance on discreet pressure rather than public protest when confronting governments that violated the Geneva Convention. The Red Cross said nothing about the Japanese invasion of Manchuria, despite full knowledge of atrocities, and even agreed to have its 1934 international convention in Tokyo. Later, when the Italians gassed Ethiopian civilians, the Red Cross protested in private, but said nothing in public.

Although the record of the Red Cross during the second world war ought to be celebrated, the meeting of the Committee on October 15, 1942, overshadows all. There was a majority for a protest against the concentration camps at the outset, but two forceful members convinced the others that discreet representations to Hitler would be more effective and less dangerous.

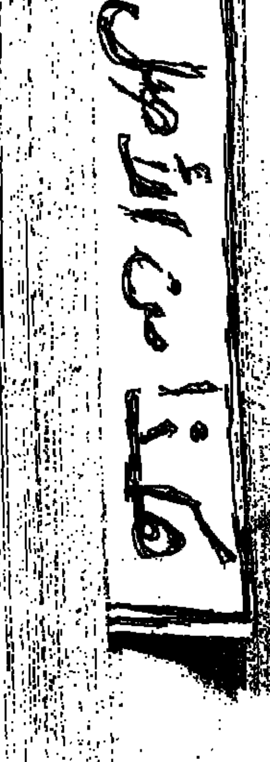
Moorehead argues that the Committee's decision was not based on anti-Semitism, but cowardice. The ICRC was frightened of provoking the Swiss government at a time when politicians were warning of Switzerland being drowned by refugees, and of the boat being already full. Second, it feared jeopardising its work on behalf of POWs.

However, she points out that the courageous example of the Hungarian Red Cross, led by Friedrich Born, shames the silence and inactivity of the ICRC. It was possible to confront the Germans on behalf of Jewish victims; the ICRC just chose not to. Rather, it watched with concern as the German Red Cross was incorporated into the Nazi system and became a wing of its purification movement.

The Red Cross has had many wars in which to redeem itself since 1945. The ICRC is now stricter about which national societies it accredits and is slowly beginning to make use of its moral authority in the public realm. It is just unfortunate that the only society that the ICRC refuses to recognise is the Jewish Red Shield of David (crescents, crosses, but no Stars of David apparently), and the only protest it has ever made has been against the Israeli government's treatment of Palestinian prisoners.

That aside, the ICRC and its 169 national societies, with their 250 million members, remains a force for good in circumstances where evil rules.

If you would like to order this book at the special price of £21 contact CultureShop (below)



Trunk calls to the future

Paul Evans

IMAGINE a yoghurt pot on the kitchen windowsill of every home in Britain. In each pot is a handful of soil. And growing out of that soil a seedling tree. It would be not only a contribution to doubling the tree cover of the British Isles, which is the lowest in Europe, it would also give people a stake in the success of the new plantings. This is the millennial vision of Trees of Time and Place, an organisation dedicated to getting public participa- [illegible] paign as a gift to future generations.

Whether it's from the yoghurt pot method, or the mass plantings by local authorities and conservation bodies, the source of the seed matters almost as much as the trees themselves. Since the early 1970s almost all trees and shrubs planted in Britain have come from seed source from abroad. Even plantings described as native or indigenous species have their origins in continental Europe and it's not clear what ecological influence this has on the British wildlife that depend on them.

But does it really matter if we only select seeds of local provenance? Will this enhance local wildlife? And will using trees with a local history strengthen the sense of place for local people? To discuss all this, Trees of Time and Place, together with the National Urban Forestry Unit, ran a conference recently in Wolverhampton.

This was a gathering of the tree clans: foresters, conservationists, growers, community groups, park officers, landscape architects, countryside managers, ecologists, all enthusiastically discussing ways of shifting the emphasis from imported tree seed to growing trees with local ecological and cultural significance. However, from outside the conference, there were concerns raised about the preoccupation with native species and a suspicion that the "native vs alien" tree debate conceals a worrying xenophobia.


ILLUSTRATION: BARRY LARKING

What is truly native and what is of local significance is a fascinating and complicated question. Dr Oliver Rackham, doyen of woodland ecologists, warned that what many assume to be native and wild trees are far from that. People have been messing about with woodland trees for centuries. Iron Age people selected one particular type of elm which then grew extensively across central England.

The English elm was a common tree until disease struck in the 1970s and wiped it out. Only isolated genetic variations of the species now survive in places such as East Anglia. Since the 18th century woodland oaks were largely replaced by strains of "super-trees", good for timber production but of limited genetic variation. Strangely, it seems that wild oak varieties have lost their ability to regenerate in the old oak woods, and it is oaks growing on derelict land that are carrying the wild genes into the future.

We have been influencing the genetic characteristics of our woods for more than 300 years. The beauty of wild oaks lies in their oddity and variability: their ecological relationships with the many species of insects, plants, fungi, birds and mammals that depend on them; and the cultural relationships with the people touched by their shade.

Trees matter to people in many ways. How we select what we plant has important cultural, ecological and political connotations, not just for us but for future generations. How we decide what is the right tree in the right place defines who we are, and our sense of place. It will also influence ecological change. I wonder what the people of the future will make of our choices.

Chess Leonard Barden

SO IT'S Alexei Shirov. The 26-year-old Latvian turned Spaniard completed a further metamorphosis from gifted but erratic grandmaster to serious world title aspirant when he defeated Russia's Vladimir Kramnik 5-3 in the eliminator to decide Garry Kasparov's next challenger in a 16-game series to start in Leon on October 16.

Kramnik, aged 23 and supposedly Kasparov's heir apparent, played a totally wimpish match. As White, he failed to dent Shirov's Grunfeld Defence; as Black, he lost a drawish bishop ending and then drew without a fight. One down with two to play, Kramnik overpressed and fell for a brilliant winning tactic. It was the only memorable moment of the series.

V Kramnik v V Shirov

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 g6 3 f3 Avoiding the main line Grunfeld. **d5 4 cxd5 Nxd5 5 e4 Nb6 6 Nc3 Bg7 7 Be3 0-0 8 Qd2 e5 9 d5 c6 10 h4 h5 11 Be2 cxd5 12 exd5 N8d7 13 d6** Putting the question: does the passed d pawn offset the weak squares around the WK? **Nf6 14 Bg5 Re8 15 Rd1** 15 0-0-0 bypasses the coming tactics. **Be6 16 Nh3 Nc4 17 Bxc4 Bxc4 18 b3 Ba6 19 Nd5?**

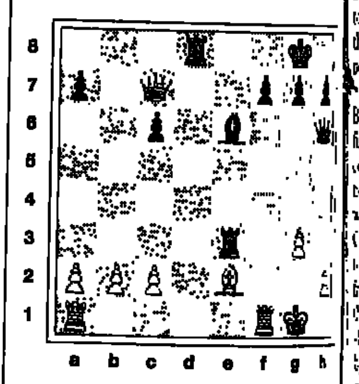
Much better is 19 d7! Re6 20 Nd5 Bb5 21 Nc7! when Black must give up the exchange and then try to draw. **e4 20 Nxf6+** Now if 20 d7 exf3+! 21 dxe8Q+ Qxe8+ 22 Qe3 Nxd5 23 Rxd5 Qc6! and White is in trouble. **Bxf6 21 d7 Qb6!!** White hoped for Re6 22 Bxf6 exf3+? 23 Kf2 Re2+ 24 Qxe2 fxe2 25 Rd6! and wins, but this rook sacrifice is devastating.

22 dxe8Q+ Rxe8 Suddenly the white king is horribly exposed. If 23 Bxf6? exf3+ forces mate, while if 23 Be3? Bxh4+ 24 Bf2 e3! **23 Qe3 Bxg5 24 Qxb6** 24 Qxg5 challenges Black to do his worst, and he does: exf3+ 25 Kd2 Qd4+ 26 Kc2 (26 Kc1? Qa1+ 27 Kc2 Rc8+ 28 Kd2 Qc3 mate) Rc8+ 27 Kb1 Bd3+ 28 Rxd3 Qxd3+ 29 Kb2 Rc2+ 30 Ka3 Qd6+ soon mates or wins the queen.

24 . . . Bxh4+ 25 Kd2 25 Qe3 exf3+ 26 Kd2 Bxf2 27 Nxf2 Re2+ is even better for Black. **axb6 26 fxe4 Rxe4** Nominally, White has level material, but Black's bishop pair now dominate.

27 Kc2 Rg4 28 Rd2 Be7 29 Rg1 Kg7 30 Nf2 Rf4 31 Nd3 Re4 32 Rgd1 Bb5 33 a4 Bc6 34 Re1 Rxe1 35 Nxe1 Bb4 With the fall of g2, Black has three united pawns. **36 Re2 Bxe1 37 Rxe1 Bxg2 38 Kd2 h4 39 Ke3 Bd5 40 b4 h3 41 Re2 f5 42** [illegible] **Kf6 45 Rh7 g5+ 46 Kg3 f4+ 47 Kg4 Ke5 48 b5 and White resigned.** White can't play Kxg5 due to f3 and can't move his rook from the h file because of h2, so the BK can eat the Q-side pawns or march to g1.

No 2530



Ignatz Kolisch v Wilhelm Steinitz, Paris 1867. Steinitz (Black, to move) wanted to play 1...Rc8 threatening both Rxc7 and Rxe2, but feared 2 Rad1 when White mates by Rd8+ if Black captures queen or bishop.

So the then world No 1 chose the defensive 1...Rf8, the game was later drawn, and Kolisch won. Steinitz later won the world title, but died a pauper. What should he have played in the diagram?

No 2529: Black moves first. (a) 1 hxg3 Qxg3 2 Qxf2+ Qxf2 mate. (b) 1 Qxb6 Qxa7 2 Qxf2+ Qxf2 mate. (c) 1 Qc5 Qf3 2 Qxf2+ Qxf2 mate. (d) 1 Qe3 Qc5 2 Qxf2+ Qxf2 mate.

Quick crossword no. 425

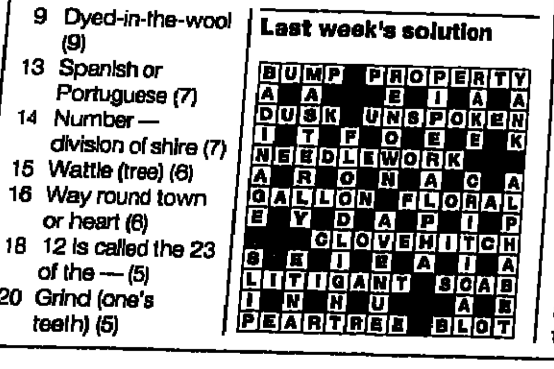
Across

1 Concealment — punishment (6)
4 Small stones (6)
8 Underground railway (5)
9 Feminine vade-mecum? (7)
10 Oil from flax (7)
11 Beginning (of disease etc) (5)
12 Auld Reekie (9)
17 Small boat (5)
19 Immediate importance (7)
21 Passed — transported (7)
22 Main artery (5)
23 Capital city (6)
24 Ghosts — sunglasses (6)

Down

1 Lowly (6)
2 Easing of tension (7)
3 Loop with sliding knot (5)
5 Spite (7)
6 Feelings in the atmosphere (5)
7 (Papal) ambassador (6)
9 Dyed-in-the-wool (9)
13 Spanish or Portuguese (7)
14 Number — division of shire (7)
15 Wattle (tree) (6)
16 Way round town or heart (6)
18 12 is called the 23 of the — (5)
20 Grind (one's teeth) (5)

Last week's solution



Bridge Zia Mahmood

HAVE you ever given a piece of advice and found that it comes back to haunt you? I once wrote that, contrary to much expert advice, it can be a good idea to make a pre-emptive bid with holdings such as Qx in a side suit.

The orthodox theory is that such holdings are dangerous for pre-emptive bidding, because they may be worthless in the play of the hand but valuable in defence. But I have found from experience that it often pays to have a little defensive strength for a pre-emptive call.

If the opponents buy the contract in a suit where you have Qx, you are very likely to make a trick with your queen because declarer will play you for shortage and finesse into your hand. At other tables, without a pre-empt, declarer will play the suit "normally" and pick up your queen more often than not.

On this deal from the recent European Mixed Teams championship, the South player at one table followed my advice and lived to regret it. But first, look at the developments at the other table. Game all, dealer South:

North
♠ 10942
♥ 10987
♦ KJ73
♣ 4

West
♠ AJ8
♥ K62
♦ A8
♣ QJ987

East
♠ K765
♥ AJ54
♦ Q1065
♣ 10

South
♠ 7
♥ 6
♦ AKJ10932
♣ AK74

South	West	North	East
1♣	1NT	Pass	2♣
Dble	Pass	Pass	Pass
Pass			

South's opening bid of one club could in his system have been based on a weak balanced hand with only a doubleton club. So, when West overcalled with a strong no trump and East bid two clubs as a Stayman enquiry, South took the opportunity to double in order to let North know that this time the opening bid was based on a real club suit.

The operation was successful, but the patient rapidly expired. West, who had a real club suit of her own, seized the moment with a redouble, and East bravely but correctly passed this out. There was no way for the defence to take more than four tricks, and East-West recorded the unusual score of plus 1160.

At the other table South opened the bidding with three clubs. According to my advice, he had the absolutely perfect hand for this tactic, since he had Qx in not one side suit but two! Sadly, though, the opponents did not buy the contract and lose tricks to either of his doubleton queens. Instead:

South	West	North	East
3♣	Dble	Pass	Pass

West doubled the opening bid for penalties — an unusual treatment among expert players these days, but a highly effective one on this hand! Once again, East-West took nine tricks with clubs as trumps, so poor South conceded a penalty of 1400. The pair at the other table who had given away a mere 1160 must have been pleased to gain 6 IMPs for this result.

Athletics European Cup

Britain snatch last-lap victory

Duncan Mackay in St Petersburg

BRITISH athletics may be bankrupt but on the track Britain showed that it still has rich reserves of talent when the men retained the European Cup against the odds in the Petrovsky Stadium here last Sunday.

At the end of an afternoon of fluctuating fortunes, during which the lead changed hands eight times in a fiercely fought competition, Britain clinched the trophy, thanks to victory in the final event, the 4 x 400 metres relay. That meant Britain took the lead for the fourth time in the day and beat Germany by 2½ points.

The victory, which ensures Britain qualify for the World Cup final in Johannesburg in September, confounded the prediction of statisticians. None believed Britain could win without the retired Linford Christie, the inspiration for their victories in 1989 and 1997, or recover from the loss of leading athletes through injury. The women also shrugged off forecasts of relegation by finishing fifth in a competition won by Russia.

Just as on the first day, when outstanding performances from the unheralded high-jumper Ben Challenger, the long-jumper Nathan Morgan and the 3,000m runner Anthony Whiteman helped give Britain a seven-point lead, the lesser-known members of the squad were the cornerstone of the victory.

Mark Richardson, winner of the 400m last Saturday, who anchored the relay team home, paid tribute to the youngsters brought in. "This is just a great team performance," he said. "No one expected us to win, not even ourselves. The second-string performers won it for us. They surpassed themselves."

While Colin Jackson was awarded the Athlete of the Meeting for his victory in the 110m hurdles, Doug Walker was the real hero. After helping Britain's 4 x 100m relay team win he was struck down by a stomach complaint, which threatened his place in the 200m race.

But the 24-year-old from Edinburgh ignored the problem to race to victory in a personal best of 20.42sec as his rivals from Germany and Russia were floundering in sixth and seventh places respectively.

Walker's win confirmed Britain had fully recovered from their disastrous start to the day. Their overnight lead was wiped out immediately when the pole-vaulter Mike Edwards no-heighted as Russia's Yevgeniy Smiryagin triumphed. "At one point I thought we had lost it," said Max Jones, Britain's performance director. "But we had a couple of good results and it was turned round."

Jackson got Britain's challenge back on track when he won the 110m hurdles title for the fourth time. The Welshman, third in the previous day's 100m, flowed effortlessly over the barriers to clock 13.17sec, his ninth consecutive victory of the summer.

Coventry's Andy Hart then finished third in the 800m in a personal best of 1min 46.19sec after picking off four runners down the home straight. Walker continued the momentum and the triple-jumper Jonathan Edwards claimed Britain's fifth victory of the weekend in an event that proved to be the turning point of the match.

The Briton leapt 17.29m to win, as expected, for a fourth consecutive year. But the highly rated Andrey Kurennoy jumped only 15.95m and finished last — effectively ruling Russia out of contention.

Germany briefly regained the lead after Boris Henry's javelin win, but were unable to finish within the two places of Britain required in the 4 x 400m relay, ending up fifth. Richardson was almost the length of the home straight ahead at the finish and could afford to showboat in the final few metres, putting the baton to his mouth as if lighting a celebratory cigar.

Picking up the trophy was a fitting end to the European Cup career of Roger Black, the team captain who is retiring at the end of the season.

Jackson flows over the last to win the 110m hurdles PHOTO MISHA JAPARIDZE

Sports Diary Shiv Sharma

Henman lifts the gloom over Centre Court

THE dark clouds that have hung over a Wimbledon Championships disrupted by unseasonal weather were forgotten when the British No 2 Tim Henman secured a place in the quarter-finals for the third consecutive year with a 6-3, 6-7, 6-3, 6-2 victory over Pat Rafter. "It was one of my best wins, if not the best," said an elated Henman, the No 12 seed.

Henman's achievement went a long way towards compensating for the disappointment of British No 1 Greg Rusedski, who retired midway through his first-round match against Mark Draper after an ankle injury sustained at the Stella Artois Tournament earlier in the month failed to stand up to the pace.

It was announced subsequently that Rusedski, the No 4 seed, had parted company with his coach Tony Pickard, who firmly believed that the player would be risking his future if he took part at Wimbledon given the damage to his ankle. His advice was ignored and Rusedski declared himself fit for the competition.

Other seeds who fell early on in the championships were Andre Agassi, Marcelo Rios, Cedric Pioline, Karol Kucera, Carlos Moya and Steffi Graf.

SCOTLAND recorded their first victory in the NatWest Trophy when they defeated Worcestershire by four runs in the opening round in Edinburgh. The Scots scored 244 for six and reduced their opponents to 98 for six.


Rusedski: ignored advice

A spirited stand of 131 between Stuart Lampitt and Gavin Haynes put Worcestershire back on course, but Scotland had plenty of runs to play with, and the county side eventually buckled under pressure. The seamer Craig Wright was Scotland's hero with figures of five for 23.

Holders Essex began their defence with a thumping 10-wicket triumph over Cheshire, who were dismissed for a paltry 92. There were also victories for Middlesex, Leicestershire, Somerset Derbyshire, Durham, Gloucestershire, Warwickshire, Hampshire, Glamorgan and Lancashire.

LESS than a year after returning to Goodison Park to begin his third spell as Everton manager, Howard Kendall bid farewell to the struggling Premiership club when his contract was terminated "by mutual consent". Brian Kidd, assistant manager at Manchester United and a former Everton player, is an early candidate to take over.

GOLFER Sam Torrance clawed his way back to his 21st Tour triumph when he won the French Open at National Club, near Versailles — his first win since the 1995 British Masters. After starting the day by losing the lead for the first time since his opening 64, the 44-year-old Scot drew on 27 years of tournament experience to answer the challenge of his Ryder Cup teammate Bernhard Langer and a multinational band of rising talents with a final-round 70. His 12-under-par aggregate of 276 in the end gave him victory by two strokes and $140,000 in prize money.

SURREY all-rounder Ben Hollioake is back in the England squad for the third Test against South Africa at Old Trafford. Also recalled to the side is Nick Knight. Making the way for the two are Mark Ealham and Steve James. Ashley Giles has been added to the squad in case an extra spinner is needed and Darren Gough returns after injury. The squad is: Stewart, Atherton, Hussain, Thorpe, Ramprakash, Hollioake, Cork, Croft, Gough, Fraser, Headley, Giles and Knight.

INDIA'S Sachin Tendulkar was chosen as the Coopers & Lybrand International Cricketer of the Year in London. Graham Thorpe was named England's Player of the Year, while the International Young Cricketer of the Year award went to South Africa's Shaun Pollock.

AUSTRALIAN Michael Doohan, the 500cc motorcycling champion of the world for the past four years, cruised to an easy victory in the Dutch Grand Prix at Assen to move from fourth to second in the current standings. Doohan, riding a Honda, completed the 120km race in 41 min 17.788sec. Italy's Max Biaggi, also on a Honda, finished second, with New Zealander Simon Crafar taking third place on a Yamaha.

STEFANO GARZELLI of Italy gained the first major success of his cycling career when he won the Tour of Switzerland after finishing 14th in the final stage, which began and ended in Berne. The 25-year-old completed the 191.8km leg in 4hr 24min 57sec to finish 53 seconds ahead of the Swiss rider Beat Zberg in the overall standings.

Rugby Union

England go forward but lack behind

Robert Armstrong in Auckland

ENGLAND were still smiling in adversity when they flew to South Africa last Sunday for the final leg of their tour after a courageous performance in the second Test at Eden Park last Saturday. They gave their opponents such a fierce pounding up front that the All Blacks are currently unable to name a team for their next Test, against Australia in Melbourne on July 11, because of the injuries they sustained.

It was hard to believe that England, who dominated play for long periods for an hour, lost by 40-10 but their coach Clive Woodward was still able to joke: "At least we haven't peaked too early." Woodward's gallows humour was the best response to the latest episode in the "Tour from Hell", which looks certain to end with a seventh successive defeat when they meet the Springboks in Cape Town this week.

Despite the embarrassing margins of England's defeats during their three weeks in New Zealand, Woodward believes his players will emerge stronger for the experience. He picked out the captain Matt Dawson, the hooker Richard Cockerill and the back-row forwards Ben Clarke and Tony Diprose, who had his best game to date, as the mainstays of the tour. He also praised newcomers such as Josh Lewsey, Tom Beim and Pat Sanderson.

He might also have mentioned the Gloucester second-rows, Dave Sims and Rob Fidler, who showed genuine international ability in most phases of forward play.

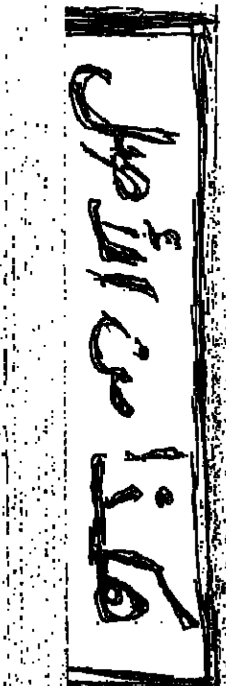
The recognised Test locks, Martin Johnson, Danny Grewcock and Garath Archer, who may be fit to face the Springboks, will be pushed hard for their places next season, as will the flankers Neil Back, Richard Hill and Lawrence Dallaglio.

New Zealand coach John Hart said: "England won a lot of possession and dominated for periods but it's bound to be a worry that they don't use it to score tries."

England achieved two notable goals, keeping possession for minutes at a time and playing close to the gain line. The downside of their challenge was the lack of variety in their back play which gave New Zealand time to cover the gaps.

England's hopes were undermined by an early shoulder injury to Austin Healey, who was not replaced until late on. The Leicester player missed crucial tackles on Jeff Wilson who scored two tries.

England's points all came from Dawson, who provided the high point with a superb short-range try. Yet once Spencer took control the All Blacks looked capable of scoring from any part of the field and they added four tries and 26 points in the last 28 minutes.



Natural selection can be coloured by prejudice

I WAS struck by some provocative links between Gary Younge's report on racism in Europe (On a journey through borders of hate, June 28) and Michael Berwyn-Jones's thoughts on rationing health-care resources (Life's born losers, June 28).

Both pieces were vividly and accessibly written, and both raised complex and important issues. But the similarity ended there, with Younge's nuanced sensitivity in marked contrast to the simplistic and morally problematic approach of Berwyn-Jones.

Urging us to think hard about the "misplaced mercies" that advances in health-care technology have brought us, Berwyn-Jones argues that since "nature does not allow other living things to breed from barren or otherwise defective stock", it is simply "selfish, feeble, immoral and nonsensical not to accept sterilisation if we know we have faulty genes".

I found it particularly painful to have this argument physically juxtaposed to Younge's disturbing and meticulous chronicle of the frighteningly crude racism that is seeping across so many European borders.

Berwyn-Jones's approach ignores the depressing tendency of the human psyche to align judgments of faulty versus acceptable genes along colour lines. Whatever nature does or does not "allow" in the realm of breeding decisions is not the point; the point is that in our current world of human domination over nature, it is people who make the decisions about what counts as "defective stock".

And people, as Younge so devastatingly shows, are more apt than ever to project their worst prejudices into such decisions.

Moreover, the fact that insurance companies are beginning to factor "faulty genes" into premium calculations, or that some individuals are turning to the courts for compensation for the inheritance of such genes, should discomfort Berwyn-Jones, not bolster his opinion that "thoughtless breeders should beware".

The spotlight should not, at this time, be on individual decisions but on the way in which those decisions are becoming rapidly constrained by the very changes — all too little debated — in legal and financial institutions to which Berwyn-Jones points.

We have recently been shown another painful juxtaposition: not long after European institutions said yes to legislative support for patenting genes, they scuttled budgetary support for the European anti-racism programme (Britain helps Europe score legal own-goal, June 21).

There is no causal link, but the two decisions are none the less revealing in exposing the "natural selection" process unfolding in the European institutional framework. Berwyn-Jones's call for facing up to hard issues is well made. But frankly, for negotiating treacherous waters such as those where both these writers venture, I would choose Younge as my guide in a heartbeat.

Bronwen Morgan,
San Francisco, California, USA

THE views expressed by Michael Berwyn-Jones seem vaguely familiar. On resuscitation of very immature babies he has a point — the statistics are clear even if individual decisions are painful. But his stand on IVF is extraordinary — who is to say that the reason for difficulty in conceiving is necessarily an hereditary defect that will bring harm to the world? And to carry on by saying it is "selfish, feeble, immoral and nonsensical" for those families to consider using artificial means to conceive is, well, "feeble, immoral . . ."

Similarly, how can he justify advocating destruction by the state of those considered to be detrimental to society? It nearly worked for the Jews, and "ethnic cleansing" (our new-age euphemism for murder) is increasingly popular.

Tony Seymour,
Adelaide, Australia

Following the Nazi gold trail

FOR 50 years Switzerland has denied that it was Nazi Germany's banker of choice (Swiss banks' offer is 'robbery', June 28). Today, its own independent commission acknowledges that the country plundered at least $444 million ($6.5 billion in today's values) from the victims of Nazism.

For more than half a century, this carefully nurtured lie was strengthened by the silent acquiescence of many governments, and every effort by outside agencies to expose the truth was repeatedly rebuffed by the Swiss.

Now the Swiss government has launched a sophisticated damage control effort to mischaracterise the core findings of our report, A Survey of Nazi and Pro-Nazi Groups in Switzerland 1930-1945, by the historian Prof Alan Morris Schom. What has Schom found that the Swiss would prefer to ignore?

That on October 17, 1942 — at the height of the Holocaust — a senior cabinet minister and future president of Switzerland, Eduard von Steiger, held meetings in his office and conspired with an élitist anti-Semitic group, the Swiss Fatherland Association (SVV), to "choke off in a most fundamental manner" the flow of Jewish refugees into Switzerland. A few weeks later Swiss customs officials received orders that no Jew could be eligible for political asylum, sealing the fate of thousands.

Then there were the medical teams sent by Switzerland to assist the Nazis on the Eastern Front. When one returning physician, Dr Rudolf Bucher, attempted to speak out against the mass murder of Jews he had witnessed, he was condemned for violating Swiss neutrality and stripped of his army commission.

And what about the dozens of photographs uncovered in the Library of Congress of pro-Nazi rallies held in 1941 and 1942 in Basel, Zurich, Lucerne, Biel, Leysin, and attended by thousands? Where was the government to protect neutrality then?

Rabbi Marvin Hier,
Dean, Simon Wiesenthal Centre,
Los Angeles, California

THE second report by Alan Schom for the Simon Wiesenthal Centre in Los Angeles has just appeared. The first Schom report in January thoroughly discredited its author. By likening Swiss wartime refugee camps to Nazi concentration camps, it invoked the condemnation of ageing residents of those Swiss camps (both Jews and gentiles).

Now Schom's follow-up report paints the Swiss government as willing handmaiden of Hitler and his henchmen. Nothing could be more insulting or further from the truth. The Swiss Federal Council, parliament and, most important of all, the Swiss people rejected Nazism decisively.

The anti-Semitism of justice minister Von Steiger and his police chief, Heinrich Rothmund, cannot be denied. But even excerpts cited by Schom to document Von Steiger's hostility to Jews make clear that his hardline policies lacked public backing. The sweeping Schom statement that all seven members of the Swiss wartime federal council were Nazi sympathisers and anti-Semitic totally lacks credibility.

Federal council wartime decrees cracked down on Nazi front groups. By 1941 the German foreign ministry press spokesman, Paul Schmidt, summed up the official reaction in a memo. It noted that: "The Fuhrer described Switzerland as having the most repugnant people and the most lamentable form of state. The Swiss are mortal enemies of the new Germany."

Thomas G Borer,
Embassy of Switzerland, London

In the doldrums Down Under

I SUPPOSE it was almost inevitable that some of our most disagreeable habits would surface as a result of recent political disturbances. What must be understood is that the rise of Pauline Hanson and her brand of simplistic policy is a reflection of policy disenchantment. As in other nations the drift to downsizing, unfettered free trade and rightwing policies have not been to the benefit of all citizens. It has meant poor distribution of wealth, and manifested itself in insecurity and social tension.

What readers must understand is that over the past quarter of a century Australians have made great strides in opening up, culturally, and socially, and have endeavoured to improve on the introspection that once existed. Indeed much has been achieved. But since the election of the current federal administration we have once again turned in on ourselves. The current conservative policy seems to be a blend of Thatcherite economics, a Maoist cultural position and Victorian social mores.

There is a glimmer of hope, however: an election is in the wind. Even with a confused loony right emerging, the polls might indeed ring to the tune of a new government. The lucky country might indeed be blessed.

Tony Walker,
Perth, Australia

OVER the past year or two numerous world leaders, both political and religious, have apologised on behalf of their constituencies for the actions of previous generations. In Australia, where the atrocities visited upon the indigenous people have been judged on a par with the worst of colonial and post-colonial oppression, calls for a similar prime-ministerial apology on behalf of the perpetrating culture have consistently fallen on deaf ears (A sorry business, June 7).

This government has not the slightest notion of compassion, justice or history.

Peter Arnold-Nott,
Canberra, Australia

Briefly

I NEVER cease to be fascinated by the way politicians and journalists manipulate language to distort truth. A current example is that when the subject is India or Pakistan they speak of nuclear bombs, when it is Iraq, they speak of "weapons of mass destruction". This term has traditionally meant nuclear bombs, but nowadays it seems it is being used to cover up the fact we know full well, that Saddam Hussein hasn't got them, while insinuating that he could have something comparably horrific (whatever that might be) in order to "justify" our continued persecution of his country.

(Dr) R Cade,
Santiago, Dominican Republic

IT IS reassuring that significant tests of human wisdom can be reduced to mere personality clashes. The case against genetically modified crops is clear (June 14). As with nuclear power, the allure of GM crops will pale into insignificance in comparison with the resulting fall-out.

There is, finally, a growing awareness that we would be better off without industrial agriculture. The motives of GM companies are the ownership and control of the basic foodstuffs of life. GM is not just an extension of the selection of plants that humans have always done — it is insertion, not selection. Cross-fertilisation will render irrelevant current squabbles over the labelling of foods — they will soon all be GM.

John Cant,
Montpeyroux, France

I HAVE never seen anyone so accurately nail all the Christian/New Age religious nonsense to the wall as Polly Toynbee (May 31). I am afraid if she were over here in the United States, the Catholics and other Christians would be trying to have her burnt at the stake. I also doubt that such an article would be printed by any major newspaper, for fear of the repercussions.

Of course when discussing the absurdity of religious superstition and hypocrisy, one certainly should not leave out mention of our Islamic and Hindu brethren, although I can understand why everyone is nervous about saying anything about Islam. My congratulations to the Guardian Weekly and to Ms Toynbee for this breath of fresh air.

James MacElderry,
Moorestown, New Jersey, USA

HURRAH for Robin Cook and his ethical policy of cutting Trident missiles in half (June 28). What's that? By half, you say? Oh dear, and I was so impressed.

Philip Lloyd Lewis,
Bournemouth

The Guardian Weekly

July 12, 1998 Vol 159 No 2

Annual subscription rates are £49 United Kingdom; £55 Europe inc. Eire, USA and Canada; £63 Rest of World.
Letters to the Editor and other editorial correspondence to: The Guardian Weekly, 75 Farringdon Road, London EC1M 3HQ.
Fax: 44-171-242-0985 (UK: 0171-242 0985).
e-mail: weekly@guardian.co.uk
Subscription, change of address and e-mail inquiries to: gwsubs@guardian.co.uk

Abubakar promises democracy date

Ian Black

SENIOR United States envoys began talks with Nigeria's ruling generals on Tuesday hoping to nudge the country towards democracy and mend strained ties with Washington's biggest trading partner in Africa.

Officials said that the under-secretary of state, Thomas Pickering, who is heading the biggest official US delegation to Nigeria for years, was expected to hold talks with the country's military ruler, General Abdulsalam Abubakar.

Gen Abubakar is expected to announce a timetable for free elections by the end of the year, ushering in a democratic era.

Chief Emeka Anyaoku, secretary-general of the Commonwealth, said after returning from Lagos that the announcement was expected to be made this week, at the end of the period of mourning for General Sani Abacha, whose sudden death last month has transformed Nigerian politics.

"General Abubakar will spell out the basis for moving Nigeria to democracy," he said. "I would not be surprised if the elections were moved until the end of the year."

Abacha had promised elections in October but, as he was the only candidate of the five officially-approved parties, they were expected to be a meaningless sham.

Nigeria-watchers have been surprised at the pace of change since Gen Abubakar, a former chief [illegible]. But there have been fears that, despite releasing prisoners, he will end up leading just another of the many military regimes that have ruled the West African giant since independence from Britain in 1960.

But Chief Anyaoku, himself a Nigerian, said after three meetings with the general that he expected to see a "credible" transition. "I quickly got the impression that Abubakar will begin to do the right thing."

He said it was unlikely that Chief Moshood Abiola, presumed winner of the 1993 election annulled by the military, would claim the presidency for himself. In the capital, Abuja, Nigerian officials said Chief Abiola's release was imminent.

Last week the United Nations secretary-general, Kofi Annan, said Chief Abiola realised it would be "naive" to expect to leave detention and become president straight away. The 60-year-old Muslim tycoon was jailed in 1994.

[illegible] officials said it was only after meeting Mr Annan [illegible] Chief Anyaoku that Chief Abiola had considered giving up his claim.

Gen Abubakar has tried to make a clean break with the Abacha regime. He has sacked advisers who were particularly close to the former strongman, and taken lucrative imports out of the hands of Abacha's cronies.

Chief Abiola's case stretched regional tensions to near breaking point. Nigeria fought an ethnic-based civil war in the 1960s in which more than 1 million died. Chief Abiola and most of his supporters are from the south. Gen Abubakar is from the north, as was Abacha.

Chief Abiola's followers, many of whom were detained or beaten by the security forces, are still wary of Gen Abubakar and say Nigerians and foreigners should be too. And they insist that they do not believe the chief has renounced his claim.

"He certainly couldn't have done it [illegible] his supporters," said Abraham Adesanya, leader of the opposition National Democratic Coalition. "If he said so in captivity that agreement cannot be binding because it is made under duress."

Comment, page 12

India 'may sign nuclear ban treaty'

Suzanne Goldenberg in New Delhi and Ian Black in London

INDIA is signalling a new readiness to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, but is demanding an end to sanctions and embargoes on the transfer of nuclear technology.

The indication from senior government officials that New Delhi would countenance signing the treaty — which it accuses of enshrining "nuclear apartheid" — is the first positive message since May, when its five nuclear tests shocked the world.

The signal comes on the eve of a meeting between the United States deputy secretary of state, Strobe Talbott, and a senior leader of the Bharatiya Janata party, Jaswant Singh. The BJP is the leader of India's Hindu nationalist ruling coalition, and Mr Singh is a confidant of the prime minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

It also follows indications from Pakistan that it might sign the treaty without waiting for India, an apparent response to the sanctions imposed on Islamabad after its six tit-for-tat tests.

Pakistan has reportedly weaponised its bomb, to be delivered by long-range missile. India has not, though one senior source suggested it was close to doing so.

The world's five official nuclear weapons states — the US, Russia, China, France and Britain — had hoped to stop any such move by either country after the tests. But there were hopes this week that the international pressure was beginning to work.

Yet New Delhi appears to believe it can command a high price for abandoning its implacable opposition to the treaty, pleading that it needs to convince a population that largely favours nuclear bombs.

India has been reluctant to acknowledge the impact of sanctions. But businessmen and foreign investors have expressed fears, and the Bombay stock exchange and the rupee have been badly hit.

The willingness to discuss the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty does not extend to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which New Delhi argues was made obsolete by its five test blasts.

However, officials said New Delhi would be willing to turn its moratorium on nuclear tests into a binding agreement and to guarantee not to transfer technology.

Some experts argue that President Bill Clinton has staked so much of his reputation on arms control treaties that Washington no longer enjoys much leverage over New Delhi. Diplomats say India's government has turned inward and is placating its coalition partners to stay in power.



Young people take part in a protest in New Delhi by more than 2,000 Sikhs PHOTOGRAPH: JOHN McCONNICO

Pope turns on liberal Catholics

Madeleine Bunting

THE Pope has taken a dramatic step to quell liberal dissent in the Church with an edict that insists on obedience to Catholic teaching on fiercely contested issues such as women priests and euthanasia, with "just punishment" for those who fail to obey.

The document defines a category of obligatory teachings for all practising Catholics to remain "in full communion" with the church. The teachings, which include banning prostitution and sex outside marriage, are to be regarded as infallible.

Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, head of the powerful Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, said in an explanatory note: "Every believer is required to give firm and definitive assent to these truths." Whoever denied them "would no longer be in full communion with the Catholic Church." Punishment would range from warnings to excommunication.

The document was being seized upon as evidence of an ageing pontiff's increasingly authoritarian efforts to combat liberal debate, particularly in Europe and North America.

Liberal Catholics are concerned that the Pope, plagued by ill-health, is doing all he can to bequeath to his successor a theological straitjacket that will handicap any attempts to undertake reform on key issues such as celibacy or women priests.

"There is a lamentable mindset in the Vatican. It's a dreadful period," said John Wilkins, editor of the UK Catholic weekly the Tablet. "He has become an old man; his attention span has dropped off. He can't listen and follow an argument through."

Liberal Catholic groups in the UK and the US argued that this papacy was responsible for the dramatic decline of the Church. The numbers of Catholics in England and Wales has halved in the past 20 years as many believers disaffected with the papacy voted with their feet.

What particularly angers liberal Catholics is that the cardinal specifically ruled out debate on women priests. "There is no basis in scripture to limit the priesthood to men only," said Mike Hiland, a married Catholic priest. "They say all 12 apostles were men, but that is neither here nor there. Should only Jews be ordained because all the apostles were Jews? Of course not."

The Week

THE Swiss government threatened to take the United States to the World Trade Organisation as state and local authorities in the US announced sanctions against Swiss banks accused of misappropriating the assets of Holocaust victims.
Washington Post, page 17

ATTEMPTS by the Russian prime minister, Sergei Kiriyenko, to crack down on tax evasion descended into chaos and threatened to imperil a desperately needed IMF rescue package.

[illegible] United States of [illegible] aggression" after an American warplane fired a missile at an Iraqi radar site when four British Tornado jets came under apparent threat of attack.

THE pilot and navigator of the United States jet that sliced through a cable-car wire in the Italian Alps in February, sending 20 skiers to their deaths, are to be court-martialled for negligent homicide.

THE United Nations secretary-general, Kofi Annan, said in a surprise announcement that he was sending a top-level fact-finding mission to Algeria, which until now has been reluctant to open its domestic turmoil to outside scrutiny.

HUNDREDS of Berber activists protested in Algiers after the government began enforcing a new law that makes Arabic compulsory for all official business. The demonstrators called for recognition of Tamazight as an official language too.

MEXICO'S government has paid nearly $230,000 in compensation to families of about 45 Indians massacred last December by paramilitaries in the state of Chiapas and 26 others who were wounded.

HONG KONG'S Kai Tak airport, famous for its vertiginous approach over Kowloon rooftops, closed as the new Chep Lap Kok airport opened.

THE French supreme court ruled that knowingly transmitting the Aids virus was not the same as murder, making it highly unlikely that three former politicians will ever be tried for the "tainted blood" scandal in 1985, in which about 400 people died after receiving blood infected with the HIV virus.

THE world's tallest man, at 2.3 metres, Alam Channa from Pakistan, has died in the United States of kidney failure aged 42.

AMERICA'S singing cowboy, Roy Rogers, who epitomised decency in a bygone era, has died aged 86.

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
July 12 1998

Israeli army chief attacks Netanyahu

Julian Borger in Jerusalem

ISRAEL'S outgoing army commander appeared to cut a large chunk of ground from under Binyamin Netanyahu's negotiating position last week when he said that agreeing to a United States proposal to cede 13 per cent of the West Bank would not necessarily endanger national security.

But the prime minister's office did not reject the remarks outright and argued that proof of Palestinian "peaceful intent" might persuade it to make greater territorial [illegible] March of this year Mr Netanyahu has infuriated US mediators by rejecting the 13 per cent compromise for the next phased withdrawal: the US says the Israeli prime minister suggested it in the first place.

Mr Netanyahu has shrugged off international criticism, insisting that only Israel can determine its own security needs. He has offered only 9 per cent of the West Bank officially, plus 2 per cent in informal bargaining. Agreement on the redeployment is essential for the resumption of broader peace talks, which have been stalled for the past 16 months.

In his last week as army chief of staff Lieutenant-General Amnon Shahak appeared to take direct aim at Mr Netanyahu's security argument in a string of farewell press interviews.

"The way I see it, the difference between 11 and 13 per cent, or 9 and 13 per cent . . . it's not that it is trivial, not that it is unimportant, but it is certainly not very, very dramatic," he told army radio. "The main thing is not only the size of the land given back, but under what conditions and in what atmosphere."

The prime minister's spokesman, David Bar-Illan, claimed the general's remarks did not contradict government policy. "If we felt we could have confidence in the peaceful intent of the Palestinian Authority, we could consider taking risks when it comes to territory," Mr Bar-Illan said.

Although the government's appraisal of Palestinian "peaceful intent" is likely to be far more demanding than that of the Israeli opposition or US diplomats, analysts said Mr Bar-Illan's confirmation that percentage limits on Israeli withdrawal were not carved in stone reflected a significant change of tack.

"There is a shift," Nahum Barnea, a commentator at the Yediot Aharanot newspaper, said. "In all the cabinet sessions, they take it for granted that Bibi [Netanyahu] promised 13 per cent." He added: "The spin has changed from how to reduce the percentage to reciprocity, what the Palestinians should do."

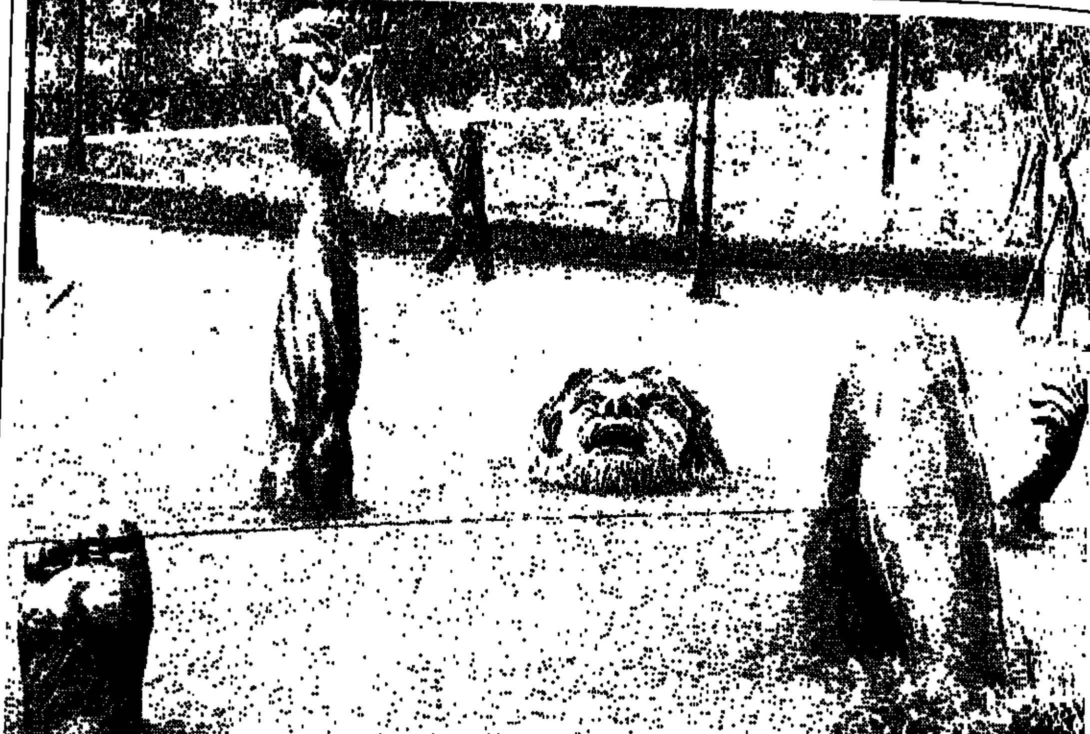
However, Mr Barnea said the rhetorical switch did not necessarily bring a deal any closer. Mr Netanyahu is anxious to avoid [illegible] rightwing coalition over the issue. Several of its more radical members have threatened to walk out if any West Bank land is handed over. The prime minister may avoid a vote of no confidence by announcing a decision after the summer recess begins at the end of this month.

The army is known to be more dovelsh than Mr Netanyahu on territorial issues and protecting Jewish settlers in the West Bank and Gaza. Rightwingers were furious last week when army planners presented a map of the country's strategic national interests that excluded 59 of the 159 Jewish settlements.

Privately, Gen Shahak has long been critical of Mr Netanyahu's rightwing policies. He played an important role in peace talks under prime minister Yitzhak Rabin, and has been tipped to follow Mr Rabin and the current opposition leader Ehud Barak in making the transition from army commander to head of the Labour party.

Earlier last week the Israeli president, Ezer Weizman, thrust aside the traditional limits of his office and unleashed a furious attack on Mr Netanyahu for his handling of the Middle East peace process, in what was seen as the first stage of an attempt to topple the government.

President Weizman said the sooner a general election was held the better, and accused Mr Netanyahu of using him falsely to convince foreign leaders he was sincere about moving the peace process forward. "I reached my red line," he said in television interviews. "I am not willing to help Netanyahu any longer. It is not possible that everyone is angry at us — the US, Europe, President Mubarak, King Hussein — and only we are right."



Keep off the grass . . . a resident of the suburb of Sanchung in Taipei, Taiwan's capital, walks past a giant sculpture, entitled Shouting Alexander, in a public park. Some locals have petitioned for the sculpture to be removed, claiming it is disturbing to children and the elderly PHOTOGRAPH: EDDIE SHIH

Howard heads off Hanson's power bid

Martin Woollacott in Sydney

THE Australian prime minister, John Howard, has almost certainly headed off an election in which the new One Nation party might have gained the balance of power in the senate, a prospect that horrified all the established parties in Australia.

Mr Howard's threat to dissolve both houses of parliament, if a bill limiting the rights of Aborigines to make claims on much of Australia's land was not passed by the senate, would very likely have led to a Labor victory, but with Pauline Hanson's One Nation in a pivotal position in the upper house.

He has now softened his bill and the independent senator who was holding up its passage has relented.

While some aboriginal leaders lamented the shift, at least one suggested that no substantive rights had been lost. The key issue was whether aboriginal groups have a right to negotiate with mining companies proposing to work land leased from the Crown to which they have claim. Negotiation would carry the possibility of compensation. Since the mainly white farmers who now hold these leases have no such right, the government opposed it.

Now the right to negotiate has been replaced by what is called "equivalent rights", which seems to mean that both groups will have a right to negotiate.

● Aborigines on Monday were granted native title rights to the sea surrounding their traditional lands, following an historic ruling by a court in Darwin.

Comment, page 12

Africa told to uphold sanctions against Libya

BRITAIN the United States and France have joined together in a diplomatic campaign to warn African countries not to breach the sanctions imposed by the United Nations on Libya because of the Lockerbie affair, *writes Ian Black*.

Last month the Organisation of African Unity decided at a summit in Burkina Faso that its members would stop complying with the sanctions from September if the Security Council refused to agree to the Lockerbie suspects being tried in a third country.

The travel and arms sanctions were renewed last week. Britain, the US and France have formally told OAU members that relations will suffer if they carry out their threat.

Britain and the US insist that the two Libyan intelligence officers accused of the 1988 bombing of a Pan-Am airliner, which killed 270 people, must be tried within their jurisdiction.

The Libyan leader, Muammar Gadafy, poses little threat regionally or internationally. But London and Washington are frustrated by his ability to buy influence in Africa, and cast them as the villains in the Lockerbie affair. Both accuse Tripoli of using cheap oil deals and other inducements to win support.

Asia shifts against West

Continued from page 1

Americans, has been a model for "can say no" ideas in several other Asian countries, including China. Should all this be condemned? Hardly, since it is politics everywhere to play with these forces of local resentment, in the United States, Europe, and Australia as well as in Asia. And, again, because criticisms of the West are not without a basis. The limp view that currency flows are like the weather and are beyond all but minimal controls is one reason for Asia's troubles. Another, according to an increasingly large constituency, is that the Western orthodox financial medicine prescribed by the International Monetary Fund has made the crisis worse.

The strange reversal of the last 12 months is that where once economics led and politics lagged behind, it is now the other way round. Amid the economic chaos the US and China have tried to create a new relationship and to sign it, if not yet to seal it, during Clinton's trip. Whether they really have done so, and, if they have, what it amounts to, is far from clear.

The US rapprochement with China, as a foundation stone for regional stability, has two important defects. First, like all such bilateral arrangements, it excludes others. When Clinton referred to Japan's problems — "President Jiang and I would give everything to be able to just wave a wand and have all this go away" — as if China and the US were ruefully united in perplexity over what to do about poor little Japan, he did a dangerous thing. Japan is as concerned about its special relationship with the US as Britain is, and it has long-term anxieties about China that will not be eased by such remarks. The joint US-Japanese operation to restore the yen, launched during the China trip, will, if successful, only assuage Tokyo to a limited extent.

What Clinton did to Japan he also did to Taiwan, by making a more direct reference to Taiwan's status than he need have done. The rough language about the US and China that followed from the Taiwanese foreign ministry was unprecedented.

Washington's preoccupation with China, and with its own economic needs, has also meant that Southeast Asia is less important to Washington than it used to be. When Thailand was first in trouble, for instance, the US failed to provide support for the original IMF package. In the past the strategic importance of Southeast Asia might have meant that Washington would have thought twice about the imposition by international financial institutions of programmes of austerity that the IMF would not dare to suggest to Germany or France. The social and political consequences, especially in Indonesia, would once have mattered too much for such a programme to go ahead, whatever the experts said. In South Asia the consequences of a policy too closely focused on China are already with us, in the shape of the Indian and Pakistani nuclear tests. It is at least possible, and perhaps likely, that there would have been no Indian tests had the US not neglected India by comparison with China.

In this broader perspective the US "engagement" with China is also a disengagement from Asia, the latest phase in a process going back to the end of the Vietnam war.

But the other problem is China itself. As much as any other Asian country, and perhaps more, China faces huge difficulties. Its banks have also lent massively to enterprises that will never be able to repay the loans, and most of which, in any case, China plans to close down. Grave unemployment, greater poverty and popular anger are all just around the corner. For China, too, the US relationship is a solution — a confirmation of its pretensions to superpower status that it hopes, by satisfying national pride, will enhance its authority domestically in the difficult times to come. There is no reason to denigrate the new relations between China and the US. But what was true more than 70 years ago, when a US diplomat chuckled at Abend's optimism, is just as true today.

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
July 12 1998

Blackshirts don't like the F-word

They wear swastikas and hate Jews, but no one in Russia dares call them fascists. **James Meek** reports from Stavropol

ONE DAY Galina Tuz had a nightmare. She was in a courtroom surrounded by racist young men with close-cropped hair wearing black shirts and swastika armbands. She knew they were fascists, they knew they were fascists, the whole town knew they were fascists — yet when she tried to say so out loud, the judge accused her of defamation and fined her the equivalent of $80.

Like all the worst nightmares, this one really happened. Last month a judge confirmed the decision of a lower court to award damages to the blackshirts of the avowedly racist Russian National Unity party for "harm to their reputation" caused by Tuz's description of them in a local newspaper as "fascists".

The party, known as RNE from its Russian initials, has hundreds of members in the southern town of Stavropol, where it openly operates a military training school. The town is plastered with posters preaching RNE's message of racial exclusivity and appealing for recruits.

Yet when Tuz took up her pen, she turned out to be the only person in this town of 300,000 — where Mikhail Gorbachev grew up, and which, during the war, experienced the savagery of Nazi occupation — who could remember, or wanted to remember, what a fascist was.

"My intention was that they should understand that there is a force here in Stavropol which is going to resist them," said Tuz, a journalist and university teacher. "It didn't quite turn out that way because they saw that I was alone. And a woman alone on the battlefield is not a warrior."

Tuz wrote her article in reply to an interview with the local RNE leader, Andrei Dudinov, in the newspaper Stavropolskaya Pravda. In it Dudinov said party members were not fascists but national socialists. He accused the Jews of being responsible for "genocide" against ethnic Russians during the Soviet years.

In a chilling comment, Dudinov said the old Soviet intelligentsia should be "wholly replaced . . . they can be of no use whatsoever to an ethnic state".

None of this was enough for the judges to accept that Tuz had a right to call RNE members fascists. Nor was the extract from the RNE code of honour that made clear the Führer-like role of their leader Alexander Barkashov, who carries the title Chief Soratnik, or comrade-in-arms. "In any situation the comrade is guided only by his righteous national consciousness according to the powers given him by the Chief Soratnik," the code says. "He is not subordinate to any other laws. The comrade must always remember Russia has no friends. Anyone who forgets this is a traitor."

In court RNE members explained that their swastika — like the Nazi symbol but with four prongs at the corners — was a traditional Russian religious symbol. The salute of the Barkashovtsy — an exact copy of the Nazi salute — was "a traditional Slavic greeting".

In an eight-page judgment in March, confirmed last month by a regional court, judge Yelena Krivolapovaya and two lay magistrates concluded that RNE's programme and publications had nothing in common with fascism "in the household understanding of the word. On the contrary, the materials studied demonstrate the patriotic aims of the Stavropol RNE".

As well as Tuz's fine, the paper was ordered to pay the equivalent of $1,000. "It was like Kafka," said Tuz. "I had the impression I was living in an alternative reality."

The offices of the Stavropol RNE are on one of the town's main streets, Lenin Street. There is nothing covert about them. A large red swastika hangs outside.

Inside are a handful of muscular youths, copies of the RNE newspaper Russian Order, and an older, tersely courteous man in a green T-shirt — Yuri Andreyev, the local spokesman. Except he wasn't going to speak. "We're acting in accordance with the Constitution . . . The media doesn't objectively cover our activities," he said.

In a front-page interview in Russian Order, Chief Soratnik spoke about what RNE had planned for rich Russian Jews, such as the media tycoon Vladimir Gusinsky.

"We will come to power by legal means, with the broadest possible support of our people, and then, by the same legal means, seek answers from Gusinsky and others for all that they have done in Russia since 1917, for all the crimes they have committed and continue to commit now," Barkashov said.

The Tuz case is now before Russia's supreme court, and the country's best-known lawyer, Genri Reznik, has suggested taking it to the European Court of Human Rights if necessary. But whatever happens, Tuz is leaving Stavropol for St Petersburg. Not because of fear of RNE reprisals, but because she believes the town itself has failed her.

"I am not running from the fascists. I'd stay just to spite them," she said. "I'm running from my friends. I suggested to people that we mount some kind of campaign. Somebody said: 'Oh, I don't think we should pay any attention; let's pretend they don't exist.' I understood I wouldn't get support."

When the trial began, Tuz said, she was surprised that none of her friends, most of them journalists, asked any questions about it. Partly, she believes, there was a lack of interest in what they thought was a marginal phenomenon. Partly it was calculated fear of the future.

"The Barkashovtsy have weapons. They're training. They're even carrying out parachute jumps. And everyone thinks: 'What if suddenly . . . perhaps they will come to power. As long as they don't touch me'."

One acquaintance of Tuz, Volodya Fitisov, explained Stavropol's attitude: "Their posters are on the walls, sure, but what else do they do?" he said. "They don't do anything vicious or damaging. They promote anti-Semitism, but that doesn't acquire any tangible form either. Why should I do anything about it? It's not my business. It's the government's."

For all RNE's anti-Semitism, there are few Jews left in Stavropol. One of the reasons the Barkashovtsy have so much passive support in their hostility towards *inorodtsy* — "those not of our race" — is the tension between ethnic Russians and members of the darker-skinned Caucasian peoples, particularly the Chechens. The war in Chechenia produced a flood of ethnic Russian refugees.

"I know one family of refugees, very intelligent people, the parents taught at Grozny university," said Tuz. "The Chechens killed their son's grandfather in front of his eyes. I can't condemn him, but the boy has joined the Barkashovtsy. He goes around sticking up posters."

Alexander, a police lieutenant, said he knew colleagues who had joined RNE. When I told him that Caucasians in the town's market did not seem to feel threatened, he smiled. "Yes, they feel quite at home here," he said. "They've got very cocky of late."

The lieutenant, who refused to give his last name, said he didn't take the Barkashovtsy too seriously, but wouldn't mind them getting involved in police duties. "I'd welcome it. Particularly since they're made up of volunteers.

"Maybe their appearance means something for the older generation, but for the young generation it doesn't have the same impact. Under Hitler the Germans established order."

The Barkashovtsy already work with local authorities in cities such as Moscow, where they provide "security" in a public park.

Some Muscovites believe that the RNE threat is being hyped by the Kremlin to create a menace for Boris Yeltsin to target in the 2000 presidential elections. If true, it has only exposed the disturbing degree to which ordinary Russians are prepared to offer at least the support of indifference to home-grown fascism and racism.

The support does go further. The region west of Stavropol, Krasnodar, which covers all Russia's Black Sea resort areas, has elected as its governor one of the most unashamed anti-Semitic politicians in Europe, Nikolai Kondratenko.

This year he subjected a gathering of local youth organisations to a vicious tirade against "Zionism". "Their tactic was to become as Russians, to infiltrate Russian families," he said. "For years, decades, evil was accumulated, and Russians understood nothing."

Russian National Unity members, with swastikas similar to the Nazis but with four prongs at the corners, at a rally PHOTO: MOSCOOP

US defence bill comes to $19 trillion

Martin Kettle in Washington

IN THE decades since the United States began to develop the atomic bomb in 1940, the government has spent $5,500,000,000,000 on nuclear arms and almost $19 trillion on defence, a new study has calculated.

The study, published last week by the Brookings Institution, reports that the US has spent more on its nuclear weapons programmes than on any other single public spending programme with the exceptions of pensions ($7.9 trillion) and non-nuclear defence ($13.2 trillion). Federal spending on nuclear weapons has exceeded spending on welfare payments, state medical insurance, health and education, the report shows.

The sum spent on nuclear weapons is equivalent to 162 times annual spending on Britain's National Health Service; $5.5 trillion would be enough to provide every household in Britain with a new, top-of-the-range Rolls-Royce.

The study shows that US stockpiles have been far larger than the public thought. When the then defence secretary, Robert McNamara, stated in 1964 that a nuclear force equivalent to 400 megatons would be enough to cause mutually assured destruction with the Soviet Union, the US stockpile already totalled 17,000 megatons.

Although the US and Russia now maintain smaller stockpiles, each still has some 10,000 nuclear warheads. The costs of nuclear arms will continue "for the foreseeable future", the report argues.

The Brookings study underlines how the sheer scale of expenditure was central to the resolution of the cold war and supports a view held increasingly by historians that the US spent the USSR into defeat, especially during the Reagan presidency.

The study was not undertaken to see whether US nuclear expenditure was worth the money, said Stephen Schwartz, the chairman of the four-year research project. But it was intended to set the stage for an "honest and fully informed debate".

"The US spent vast amounts on nuclear weapons without the careful and sustained debate or oversight that are essential both to democratic practice and to sound public policy," Mr Schwartz said. "In most cases, even rudimentary standards of government policymaking and accountability were lacking."

The Brookings president, Michael Armacost, said that a central conclusion was that "government officials made little effort to ensure that limited economic resources were used as efficiently as possible so that nuclear deterrence could be achieved at least cost to taxpayers".

During the cold war, said Mr Schwartz, the development and deployment of nuclear weapons was frequently justified on the grounds that they were less expensive than conventional forces, when the reverse was true.

Had the facts been known, "there almost certainly would have been a debate about the wisdom," Mr Schwartz said.

But Paul Warnke, head of the arms control and disarmament agency during the Jimmy Carter presidency, disagreed. "I don't think it would have made much difference. The people were scared of the Russian threat and would have spent whatever it took."

Decades of spending

US government historical obligations. Trillions of $

National defence	13.213
Social Security	7.856
Nuclear weapons & infrastructure	5.481
Income security	5.346
National debt (net interest)	4.722
Medicare	2.337
Health	1.700
Transportation	1.572
Education, training, employment/social services	1.554
International affairs	1.238
Agriculture	0.971
Natural resources & environment	0.844
General science, space & technology	0.780
General government	0.690

Source: US Government

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
July 12 1998

Relaxed view from Cook's Continental tour

EUROPE THIS WEEK
Martin Walker

AT THE end of the six-month marathon of the UK presidency of the European Union the Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, says that he now feels distinctly more European, and that Europeans have finally accepted Britain as a full member of the team.

"There has been a 180-degree turn, which has fundamentally altered our relations with Europe. It is good for us and it is good for Europe. And yes, I feel more comfortable, more confident in European circles."

Cook is a different man in Europe, more relaxed and less prickly, and his fellow foreign ministers are baffled by his unflattering image in the British press.

"Just as many of my constituents feel both Scottish and British, we have to feel that we are British and European too. It has been impressive, the degree to which there is a range of common values, and in particular with our sister parties.

"Eleven of the other European governments are with us in the Socialist International. And while it is not exclusive and does not work as a caucus, our informal discussions before the full-scale meetings do matter."

Yet by contrast, Cook says that if he has learnt one single thing in his six months running the General Affairs Council, the EU's main co-ordinating body, it has been the importance of Britain's American relationship.

"It helped us resolve that nasty trade row over American sanctions [against EU companies trading with Cuba or Iran]. And the fact that we are now fully engaged in Europe boosts Britain in Washington. And it helps that I have as good a relationship with the American secretary of state as any foreign secretary has had in 20 years," he adds.

"This is Britain's added value for Europe. We have that relationship, and we are on the United Nations security council and in the G8. So on Iraq or on the Middle East or Kosovo, we can use these different roles to try and get the institutions working together. I think that's why we have a united international position on Kosovo, by contrast with the years of disarray over Bosnia.

"I have learnt just how pivotal this network of contacts can be, and not forgetting the Commonwealth, which has helped us get things moving with Nigeria."

Cook, in a pensive but cheerful mood during the interview in the study of the British ambassador to Luxembourg, brushed aside the three most controversial incidents in the UK presidency. He played a starring role in the first, provoked by his visit to the Israeli settlement being built on traditional Arab land outside Jerusalem.

"Only in Britain and in Israel was my visit to Har Homa seen as anything but courageous and honourable. It was not contentious in Europe, where the other foreign ministers knew that I was carrying out our common policy," Cook insists.

"That difficult weekend in Brussels when we launched the euro was not a dispute between countries, where the EU presidency can mediate. It was disputes within the French and the German delegations, where the presidency can hardly intervene. And taken as a whole, it all worked. The euro was launched and the markets were happy."

Cook was less robust in explaining the widespread EU criticism of Britain's role in the Iraq crisis, where the Dutch foreign minister, Has van Mierlo, publicly complained that the UK worked with Washington and failed to consult the EU.

"Britain's view had the most support, 11 out of 15 nations sent contributions to the Gulf task force."

He ticks off his personal list of successes: a common EU position on China and human rights; a common position on engaging with Iran, on Kosovo and on the Middle East, and on the reaction to the new nuclear status of India and Pakistan.

"There is inadequate recognition that we have gone a long way towards a common foreign policy, all the while maintaining our British insistence that these positions be reached by consensus.

"And we did resolve that impasse over Cyprus, when France said we could not start accession talks with a divided island and Greece threatened to veto all the other central and eastern European candidacies if we did not."

It comes down, Cook says, to personal chemistry between foreign ministers, who have to settle the disputes that officials have found unbridgeable.

"The thing about Robin Cook is that he claims a special relationship with everybody," says one of his Scandinavian admirers. "With the French, he talks of the Auld Alliance with Scotland. With us, he claims to be an honorary Nordic."

Cook is, however, respected by his EU peers as a brisk and fair chairman, who gave them all a memorable weekend in his home town of Edinburgh.

But he could be facing one problem for which the foreign ministers' trade union will never forgive him. It was on his watch that the scheme was first publicly floated by the commission to take away their real power.

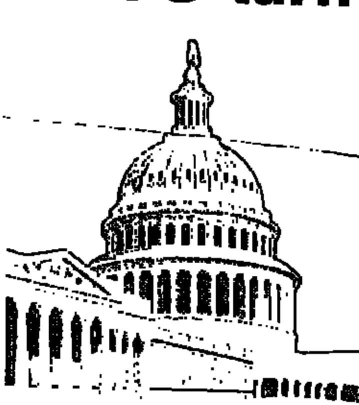
Since the Treaty of Rome, the job of co-ordinating Brussels and member states, and preparing all the action agendas for EU summits, has been entrusted to the foreign ministers, meeting as the General Affairs Council.

Claiming that the ministers were too obsessed with foreign policy, the commission president, Jacques Santer, wants to replace them with a new high-power council of deputy prime ministers. Cook's successor, the Austrian foreign minister, Wolfgang Schussel, has pledged to block the plan.



Robin Cook . . . 'We have to feel that we are British and European too' PHOTOGRAPH: DON McPHEE

CNN U-turn blurs truth about sarin



Washington diary
Martin Kettle

CNN made a clear and unequivocal statement last week retracting accusations that United States special forces used the nerve gas sarin during an Operation Tailwind mission to kill US Vietnam war defectors hiding in Laos in 1970.

"We acknowledge serious faults in the use of sources who provided NewsStand with the original reports," said the CNN News Group chairman, Tom Johnson. His statement went on to apologise to viewers and "to the personnel involved in Operation Tailwind".

But was the retraction too clear and the apology too unequivocal? The two journalists who did most of the work for the exposé carried on CNN and in Time magazine last month say they were.

April Oliver, a CNN producer who worked on the Tailwind investigation for eight months, said that she stood by the story. "I feel that this report was solid," she said. CNN had "abandoned" her, she added. "All of our sources came under tremendous pressure, including some death threats."

Her colleague, Jack Smith, called CNN's inquiry into the Tailwind story "a corporate whitewash". "They don't want what we reported to stand: that they were killing defectors over there as part of their unwritten mission statement, and they were using nerve gas," he said. "They set out to lynch it, and they succeeded."

After the retraction, CNN asked Oliver and Smith to resign and when they refused, sacked them. Its most celebrated reporter, Peter Arnett, who fronted the broadcast, was "reprimanded". CNN has been praised for the speed and unflinching tone of its response to the criticism of the Tailwind story, which it launched on its new flagship NewsStand programme on June 7.

A spokesman for the Pentagon — which had most to lose had the allegations been upheld — said he was "gratified" by the retraction.

But is this too easy? It may be a mistake to leap to the conclusion that the story was all wrong, just as it was clearly a mistake to accept without qualification that everything about it was right. If Oliver and Smith made serious journalistic errors — which the report CNN commissioned from the lawyer Floyd Abrams shows to be the case — it does not follow that their story was the pack of lies some allege.

While some of the errors exposed by the Abrams report are inexcusable, they are primarily matters of judgment. To compare them to recent instances in which columnists have lied, made up quotes or stolen information, is facile. It trivialises the allegations and underestimates the military and political interests they challenged.

The controversy is about more than journalistic standards. It is about the Vietnam war. CNN was taking on not merely the Pentagon but America's unquiet soul, because 30 years on, the intensity of the argument about Vietnam is almost as strong as ever.

Last month Peter Arnett picked up his home phone and heard a voice say: "I think you and Hanoi Jane better get out of the country very quickly."

The fact that it was CNN, whose chairman is the anti-war activist Jane Fonda's husband Ted Turner, that carried the Tailwind story was manna to the conspiracy theorists.

Moreover, the story struck a raw nerve. Many veterans are sustained by the belief that there are missing GIs in Vietnamese jails to this day. The allegation that some could have been defectors is exceptionally provocative.

The media critic and author Howard Kurtz wrote in the Washington Post last week: "CNN's nerve gas story involved no fabrications or thievery. The two main producers strongly believed, and still believe that it is true."

None of this proves that the CNN story was true, and the Abrams report documents its weaknesses, concluding that the evidence was insufficient to support the conclusions. In particular, CNN relied too much on two witnesses.

The first was Admiral Thomas Moorer, a former chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, now 87, who lives in an "assisted-care retirement home" and whose responses, Abrams says, "are often cast in hypothetical terms". Nevertheless, Adm Moorer was used a lot in the 18-minute CNN report, and appeared to confirm both the nerve gas and the defector themes.

But a closer reading of his interviews, including parts not broadcast, shows he repeatedly stressed his uncertainty and lack of first-hand knowledge of some of the claims Oliver put to him.

Abrams concludes: "Taken as a whole, these passages cannot be said to constitute confirmation of the CNN broadcast." In another passage he writes: "Admiral Moorer simply does not come close to offering the sort of support for the conclusions offered by CNN that the programme asserts that he does."

The second problematic witness was Lieutenant Robert Van Buskirk, second-in-command of the operation, who described the effects of the nerve gas and his part in the killing of two white men, at least one of whom swore at him in English.

Shortly after appearing in the broadcast, he denied he could confirm the use of sarin and became ambiguous about the type of gas used. The programme made no mention of the fact that in a 1983 book Lt Van Buskirk made no reference to the use of poison gas or to his involvement in killing white men in Laos, or that he now attributes his recollection of these events to a sudden overcoming of repressed memory syndrome. Lt Van Buskirk was so central to the allegations, says the report, "that these overriding questions put into issue not only what he said but the bona fides of the broadcast as a whole".

The Abrams report concludes that CNN indulged in "journalistic overkill" and "broadcast accusations of the gravest sort without sufficient justification and in the face of persuasive information to the contrary". But Abrams says: "This was not a broadcast that was lacking in substantial supportive materials." These materials justify "serious continued investigation". That chance has almost certainly now been lost.

"Every reporter should shiver in their boots tonight," Smith said.

SNP gains fray Labour nerves in Scotland

Peter Hetherington and Ewen MacAskill

LABOUR in Scotland was last week plunged into turmoil on two fronts with the latest opinion poll showing a big nationalist advance over the past month and the party facing an embarrassing rebellion in another council hit by sleaze allegations.

Coping with the latest survey by ICM, which put the Scottish National party and Labour neck-and-neck in the run-up to next year's elections to an Edinburgh parliament, was bad enough. But growing support for independence — 56 per cent of Scots now want to break with Britain — sent shock waves through the party at a time when it is attempting to head off more damaging publicity in the council chamber.

In England, where the Government faces little opposition, Tony Blair has managed to draw a line between New Labour and scandal-hit councils by portraying them as fiefdoms run by another party, which happens to be Old Labour. North of the border, where there is a strong, left-leaning nationalist opposition, the Government has had no such luck.

A few weeks ago, as North Lanarkshire council was attempting to discover how its works department "lost" £4.6 million — and why a plumber earned more than £54,000 a year and a lollipop man a reported £17,500 for a 10-hour week — voters took their revenge. In a council byelection the SNP unseated Labour with a 36 per cent swing — one of the largest votes recorded against the party.

The Government and the party hierarchy took what it thought was decisive action. The Scottish Secretary, Donald Dewar, ordered an inquiry into the council's works department while Alex Rowley, the new general secretary of the Scottish party, told the council leader, Harry McGuigan, to step down.

But Mr McGuigan, taking heart from Glasgow's beleaguered Lord Provost, Pat Lally — who last week won his fight to remain as first citizen after being earlier told to leave his post — refused to budge. He claimed he was the victim of character assassination, hit back at the party hierarchy, and blamed "gross incompetence", and worse, elsewhere in the council for the deficit. "I accept responsibility but not culpability," he said. "Elected members knew completely nothing about this."

The council's Labour group rejected a vote of no confidence in Mr McGuigan by 36 votes to 17, and the party has no power to force him out.

Labour made a humiliating climbdown by withdrawing the unspecified charges against Mr Lally, who accused the party leadership of being "scoundrels" and "political pygmies".

In January the party found that Mr Lally, an old-time political fixer, and the deputy provost, Alex Mosson, were apparently guilty of breaching Labour's rules with the catch-all charge of bringing the party into disrepute. Three months earlier they were suspended, along with seven other councillors. But Scotland's Court of Session lifted the suspensions on Mr Lally and Mr Mosson while granting a judicial review of the party's disciplinary process.

If Mr Dewar loses next year's elections to the Scottish parliament, Scotland rather than Northern Ireland, as many had thought, will be the first in line to make the break with England.

With the election 10 months away, Labour in Scotland is in poor shape to meet the challenge from a rampant SNP. Mr Dewar is beset by one controversy after another, the party organisation is a shambles and MPs and activists are engaged in constant internecine warfare.

Last September Mr Dewar was being fêted as the "Father of the Nation" for delivering a decisive vote in the Scottish devolution referendum but is now being subjected to a whispering campaign, accused of being indecisive and of ruling with a small group of advisers.

"He is presiding over the break-up of the union," a disgruntled Labour MP said.

But Mr Dewar is defiant, insisting he will not resign as Scottish Secretary until May. He will then face two options: either he has won and becomes First Minister of the Scottish Parliament, the culmination of a personal crusade for devolution since the late 1950s, or the SNP has won.



Donald Dewar: 'I do not think that nation-state nationalism is the most attractive of political philosophies' PHOTOGRAPH: MURDO MacLEOD

The suddenness of the SNP rise puzzles the Labour leadership. Most Labour politicians accept that much of the party's difficulties have been self-inflicted. The nationalist leader, Alex Salmond, has been able to sit back and watch Labour self-destruct. There is the constant drip of Labour council scandals (from which SNP councils are not immune but which receive less publicity), leftwing unhappiness with Blairism, rows ranging from university tuition fees to the failed knighthood for Sean Connery and, potentially the most significant, the loss of the previously ultra-loyal Daily Record, the biggest circulation daily. And then there is what one Labour insider referred to as "the force of Scottishness".

Labour strategists in Glasgow and London have not yet worked out a counter-strategy, but one is taking shape. Labour will reject trying to be more Scottish than the SNP, nor will it tailor a leftwing agenda for Scotland. Instead, it will present itself as a UK party delivering on what matters to the electorate: education, health and jobs.

There was a fatal flaw in Scottish nationalism, said Mr Dewar. "I think at the end of the day the nationalists will be very badly damaged by the very nature of their philosophy. They are at the end of the day agin [sic] something rather than for it and I do not think, as we enter the 21st century, that nation-state nationalism is the most attractive of political philosophies — but that is a matter for the electorate."

MPs' hours may be eased

Anne Perkins

MPs could be allowed to start their weekends early on Thursdays and have mid-term breaks at the same time as school half-terms in the first serious attempt to introduce something approaching family friendly hours into politicians' working days.

Some Tories protested that it would mean less chance to keep tabs on the Government.

Ann Taylor, Leader of the House, disappointed some of her more impatient colleagues last week by proposing just three reforms: as well as early Thursday nights and breaks at the same time as school half-terms, she wants MPs on committees to look at new laws that will able them to do their work during September instead of waiting until all MPs return in mid-October.

If she could persuade a majority of MPs to accept reform, more changes could follow which would see late-night sittings — sometimes all-night sittings — and the leisurely after-lunch start consigned to the history books. The Commons could even sit during September.

"There is a real appetite for more radical change," one committee member said. "We need to do more than just abolish hats," he added, referring to the biggest change so far — to end the rule requiring MPs raising a point of order during a vote to have their heads covered.

But some Tories are deeply suspicious of change, and fear that it will be misunderstood and seen as slacking, although the Government insists the number of hours worked by MPs will be broadly in line with the past few years.

The statistics show that the first year of a new parliament usually sees a peak in MPs' workloads, with the Commons sitting for more than 2,000 hours as governments push through their election commitments.

The hours are also influenced by longer first sessions, often lasting nearly 18 months rather than just a year. The first year of this government looks set to match earlier records, with MPs now expecting to stay at Westminster until the middle of the first week of August.

Fay Weldon sparks rape row

Lucy Patton

FAY Weldon last week said she regretted a magazine interview in which she said rape "isn't the worst thing that can happen to a woman".

Ms Weldon, the 66-year-old novelist and former feminist icon, said she should have told the reporter that the "worst thing", in fact, was death.

She was criticised by women's groups after the Radio Times interview, which said she had called for the criminal charge of rape to be changed to aggravated assault.

The magazine quoted her as saying her remarks were an appeal to society to stop "glamorising" rape. Ms Weldon later said she wished she had rephrased her comments and stressed that she supported the work of anti-rape organisations.

The novelist said: "I did say those words, but what I said next wasn't quoted: that rape's not the worst thing that can happen to a woman — death is."

In the article Ms Weldon said she was drawing her conclusions from first-hand experience when a male friend tried to rape her in the back of a taxi.

"It was nasty, but didn't shatter my view of men. The man simply wanted sex. Now it's unfashionable to say this, but rape isn't the worst thing that can happen to a woman if you're safe, alive and unmarked afterwards."

Later she said: "This is what comes of talking about rape to a male journalist. For all I care, rapists can be strung up from lamp-posts. Rape is a banal, evil and hideous assault."

The Radio Times said that it was "surprised" at her statement, adding: "Andrew Duncan [the reporter] was so concerned at the sensitivity of the subject, he talked again with Ms Weldon. In response she confirmed, in writing, the words that were reported in the Radio Times."

Polly Toynbee, page 12

BMA: one in four women are abused

Sarah Boseley

MORE than one woman in four experiences domestic violence at some time in their lives, ranging from being punched, choked or bitten to being forced to have sex against their will, according to a report from the British Medical Association.

The true extent of the violence meted out by men to their female partners is probably even higher, the report suggests, because many women tell nobody, either for fear of what their partner will do to them or because they do not want him prosecuted or for the relationship to break up. Only a quarter of domestic attacks are reported to police.

A survey in Canada in 1993 of 12,300 women found that nearly one in three (29 per cent) said they had suffered violence at a partner's hand since the age of 16. In the UK smaller local studies have shown similar results.

A study in Islington, north London, of 571 women and 429 men found one woman in three reported domestic violence and a quarter had been forced to have sex against their will by their partner. In Surrey another study of 484 women found one in four had suffered violence or been raped.

After family and friends, women are most likely to confide in their doctor, research shows. But, the BMA says, GPs have tended not to ask questions when a woman is injured or troubled because they have not known what to do if they discover she has been beaten by her man.

In up to 90 per cent of cases children witness their mother being attacked. In 45 to 70 per cent the father inflicts violence on the children as well as the mother. As well as physical abuse, which includes burning, starving and knifing, and rape and sexual assaults, women suffer psychological abuse, such as being humiliated and degraded, being isolated from family and friends, and being made to think they are going mad, the report says.

The BMA's report tells GPs that they can make a difference if they intervene. They should question women they suspect may have been abused, ensuring them of absolute confidentiality — except in exceptional circumstances, such as where there are children in danger. They should find out what agencies exist to help such women and offer information and advice.

Meanwhile doctors facing difficult and distressing decisions about when to stop treatment and allow patients to die may also be helped by guidelines.

The BMA responded to the growing number of inquiries from troubled doctors by issuing a consultation document on the ethics of withdrawing and withholding treatment, including food and liquids. The document was put on the Internet and BMA officials said they might recommend changes in the law to the Government.

Guidelines to cover every eventuality, however, might prove impossible. Some of the hardest decisions concern children, although the BMA document says there is no reason why children should be treated any differently from adults.

The BMA website can be found at www.bma.org.uk

Unwed fathers to get equal rights

Clare Dyer

MEN who father children outside marriage are to be given the same parental rights as married fathers in a move designed to bring the law into line with social changes.

The Lord Chancellor, Lord Irvine, has decided that unmarried fathers who jointly sign the birth register with the baby's mother — around 180,000 a year — should automatically acquire parental responsibility.

Under current law, married parents have equal parental rights but where parents are unmarried, the mother has the sole right to take decisions about the child's upbringing. The fact that a father's name appears on the birth certificate makes no difference.

The Lord Chancellor has decided to change the law to reflect the fact that marriage is no longer seen in society as a prerequisite for having children. More than one in three babies — 35.8 per cent in 1996 — are now born out of wedlock, the majority to parents who are in stable relationships.

The reform is a strong candidate for inclusion in the Modernisation of Justice Bill, which Lord Irvine hopes to bring forward in the autumn, and which could become law by next summer.

Evidence shows that the public is largely unaware that mothers have all parental rights if a child is born outside marriage. Even when an unmarried father supports a child financially he has no extra rights.

If the mother is absent, the father has no legal right to consent to medical treatment for the child. He has no right to object if the mother puts the child up for adoption or changes the child's surname, and he cannot invoke international machinery to return abducted children to their home country.

At present unmarried fathers can acquire rights only if the mother agrees to share them by entering into a parental responsibility agreement, or if a court makes a parental responsibility order. But only 5,000-7,000 such agreements are registered each year, and only 5,500 parental responsibility orders were made in 1996.

In the same year, 181,647 unmarried fathers jointly registered their babies' births with their partners. That represented 78 per cent of the 232,663 births outside wedlock. In three out of four cases where the birth was registered jointly, the parents were living together.

Once the new law comes into effect, future fathers who register births jointly with the babies' mothers would automatically have parental responsibility. But the law will not confer rights retrospectively on fathers who jointly registered births in the past.

The reform is one of a number of options for change canvassed in a consultation paper last March. Others included automatic parental responsibility for all unmarried fathers, or just for those living with the mother at the time of the birth.

An official said that extending rights to those who signed the birth register with the mother was the option most favoured in responses to the consultation. "A few responses said it would undermine the status of marriage, but not a significant number."

Industry suffering from lack of quality graduates

John Carvel

BRITISH industry is running seriously short of graduates with the right combination of technical skills and commercial attitudes, according to a survey of 250 leading blue-chip companies published last week by the Association of Graduate Recruiters.

Industrial firms said they would be unable to fill half the vacancies for newly qualified graduates this year, and non-industrial firms said the shortfall would be 30 per cent.

Although the companies received on average 40 applications for every vacancy, they were finding it increasingly difficult to recruit electrical and electronic engineers and graduates in computer science and information technology. Recruitment problems were most severe outside London and the southeast.

"Organisations rate interpersonal skills and customer orientation very highly. They are satisfied with graduates' general IT skills and computer literacy, but finding people who are both technically competent and commercially aware is difficult," said Roly Cockman, the association's chief executive.

Britain was producing too few high calibre graduates in IT, food science, chemistry and some types of engineering. Despite rapid expansion of the universities over the last 10 years, they were not keeping pace with companies' demand for these specialists, which is expected to rise by 12.4 per cent this year following an 11.5 per cent increase last year.

Tony Blair told the Labour party conference last year that the Government would create places for an extra 500,000 students before the next election. But education ministers have warned that most expansion would be in further education colleges, and they have no plans to direct students into the subjects in most commercial demand.

Mr Cockman said there was little evidence of organisations responding to the shortage by increasing salaries. The median starting salary for a new graduate in the non-industrial sector was expected to be £16,600 — up 4.3 per cent on last year and in line with the increase in average earnings. The median graduate starting salary in the industrial sector would be £16,500, up 5.3 per cent. The top 10 per cent of graduate earners could expect £21,000 or more from London firms.

Students wanting to impress employers should continually update their IT skills and gain as much work experience as possible to increase their business awareness, Mr Cockman said.

Blueprint to end child support chaos

Lucy Ward

ABSENT fathers will be forced to pay up to 25 per cent of their take-home pay in child maintenance under a comprehensive shake-up of the much-criticised Child Support Agency announced last week.

Most parents — whether absent or looking after children — will be better off under the new scheme, the Government says. The changes will apply to all cases already on the CSA's books, as well as new ones. The number of families covered is expected to reach 1 million by 2001.

Mothers on benefits will be allowed to keep up to £10 of the maintenance a week in an attempt to encourage them to co-operate with the CSA. At present any money paid in maintenance is deducted from benefits, a measure that has been regarded as a serious flaw.

The new £10 bonus, plus a simple formula for maintenance, will mean that around three-quarters of both absent parents and parents looking after children will financially benefit, according to the Government.

The formula means that for the first time parents will pay on a sliding scale according to the number of children, rather than the present flat rate demanded.

Maeve Sherlock, director of the National Council For One Parent Families, welcomed the principle of a simplified formula, but urged that maintenance contributions be set at a level ensuring adequate care for children.

However, the National Association for Child Support Action, which represents mainly absent parents but also some parents with care, had reservations. Chairman Andy Farquarson said: "The simpler the formula, the blunter the instrument. A simple formula will dispense rough justice, and that is no justice for children."

The green paper will build in transitional arrangements to ease the change for parents who either receive less or pay more under the new formula.

The overhaul of the CSA, under legislation backed by Labour as well as the Tories, is intended to bring to an end seven years of controversy and bitterness over the agency.

A report published last week by the parliamentary ombudsman condemned the CSA for repeating basic errors and causing distress and hardship through inadequate attempts to win maintenance for families by pursuing absent parents.

Ministers have grown increasingly concerned that 90 per cent of agency staff time is taken up in assessing claims under the current highly complex formula, with only 10 per cent devoted to chasing up payments. Pressure for reform has also mounted amid revelations that 70 per cent of parents with care of children are now refusing to co-operate with the CSA.

While many mothers who refuse claim they fear violence from the absent partner, ministers suspect that a significant proportion of those opting not to co-operate with the agency have in fact set up informal maintenance arrangements, aware that formalising the process will simply lead to a cut in benefits.

A national advertising campaign will be launched to promote the new system, warning so-called "dead-beat dads" that there will be no escape from maintenance payment.

One cloud over the introduction of the reforms is the likely time needed before the changes reach the statute book. One source last week suggested legislation could take two years to go through, but predicted that MPs — who say complaints about the CSA form a huge percentage of correspondence and constituency surgery complaints — would press for swifter action.

Change is in the air

FEW PEOPLE outside Nigeria had heard of General Abdulsalam Abubakar when he succeeded the unlamented Sani Abacha last month. But the world is beginning to sit up and take notice that the latest military man to lead the giant of West Africa may be about to take it in a new direction. Kofi Annan, the United Nations secretary-general, and Chief Emeka Anyaoku, his opposite number at the Commonwealth, have both been to Abuja and returned exuding optimism. Political prisoners have already been freed and more releases are said to be imminent. This week, as the official mourning for Abacha ends, Gen Abubakar is set to announce a timetable for free and credible elections.

There is good news here, but caution is necessary. Countries that had long struggled with pariah Nigeria but were never prepared to impose an oil embargo — the only effective weapon — may have been too quick to embrace the new reality. There is already striking international unanimity that Chief Moshood Abiola, presumed winner of the 1993 elections, annulled by the military, cannot now become president when he is released. However, his supporters insist he has not yet made up his mind and cannot do so until he is a free man.

Only Nigerians can decide how to have a proper democracy: after being ruled by soldiers for all but 10 years since independence in 1960, they have been here before. Even Abacha freed prisoners and met Ken Saro-Wiwa, who he later hanged, when he took power in 1993. Chief Abiola's own democratic credentials are far from perfect.

But there are still some unusually positive signs: Abacha died a natural death, not at the hand of coup plotters now digging in to defend their own position, so his demise has created a rare opportunity. His own grip on power had been slipping as a growing number of senior army officers appeared to realise that military rule had come to a dead end, with kleptocracy and administrative paralysis the norm not the exception.

True, it is very hard to imagine Nigerian politics without the generals, on or at least just off stage. But Gen Abubakar has already made clear he does not intend to stay in power, so there is no suspicion, as there was with Abacha, that he intends to hold sham elections and transform himself into a nominally civilian president. He has already dismissed some of his predecessor's more intimate cronies, but he will have to move carefully if he is to survive to usher in a truly democratic era. He will also have to challenge the elaborate system of corruption that governs nearly every financial arrangement in Nigeria and which the officer class has long seen as its path to a personal fortune.

There are other difficulties: Nigeria's military is largely made up of Hausa-Fulani northerners while the democracy movement is mainly led by southern Yorubas. New political parties will have to emerge to replace the five officially sanctioned ones that had endorsed Abacha as their only candidate. Help with observing elections and setting up new constitutional procedures from organisations such as the Commonwealth will be necessary and welcome.

In the short term there should be more releases, and not just of big names. Twenty Ogonis arrested with Saro-Wiwa in 1994 and still being held without trial must go free. Nigerians must feel the change. Emergency decrees and regulations must go. Stories such as the harrowing account of the young democracy activist who fled his homeland only to suffer misery and degradation in a British detention centre must become a thing of the past. Nigeria is a huge and complex country and its long-suffering people will be right to be sceptical about real change until the men on horseback dismount and go back to barracks. It would be too cruel if these early hopes were dashed by more business as usual, Nigeria-style.

Spend with confidence

JAPAN seems set to announce tax cuts worth about $29 billion for next year — though it is not clear whether they will be enough to boost its flagging economy. The effect of recent economic packages has been like ordering from a Japanese menu — lots of numbers but at the end they don't add up to much quantitively speaking. The mooted cuts (in residential and income taxes) are not large compared with the size of Japan's economy. More important, they include some cuts already announced and must be judged against the backdrop of a five-year plan of tax increases, the first of which was implemented last year. At the very moment Japan needed people to start spending to boost a fast declining economy, taxes were raised throwing the economy into an unnecessarily severe recession.

If Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic party had lowered taxes last year it might have done the trick. But now consumers are worried stiff about rising unemployment and declining output, and are almost obsessed with the need to save for their underfunded retirements. So, they may decide to put the income from tax cuts under their pillows or invest it abroad to get a higher return (thereby depressing the value of the yen still further). If Japan wants to stem its slide into recession — which would ricochet through Asia — it will need a loose fiscal and permissive monetary policy to pull it out of a tailspin. In the first quarter the economy contracted by 5.3 per cent a year.

This has long ceased to be a problem for Japan alone because another fall in the yen could wreak fresh havoc in East Asia and force China to devalue — with all that that implies for fresh economic turbulence in the region and the rest of the world. But signs that Tokyo is facing up to its problems helped to steady the yen on the foreign-exchange markets last week and also helped to steady other emerging markets.

President Clinton's charm offensive with China (received with mixed feelings in Japan, which sees its own special relationship with the United States at risk) is partly an attempt to prevent China from devaluing its way out of trouble. Japan's fears, which are probably unfounded, would die away once normal economic growth is resumed. But when that will happen is anyone's guess. It will partly depend on when Japan recovers its self-confidence as a nation. Above all, the self-confidence to go out and spend.

Nationalism on the rise

THE emergence of Pauline Hanson's One Nation party has thrust Australian politics into a crisis that has significant implications for the rest of the world. It could complicate the already difficult affairs of an Asia, where economic pressures are producing a sharper, more nationalist mood. And if Australia were to let slip its reputation as a country where racial and ethnic relations are sanely managed, that would have its effect, subtle or otherwise, everywhere.

The crisis in Australian politics has been postponed rather than averted by agreement on the vexed question of aboriginal title to much of Australia's land. The agreement, still not quite in the bag, means that the prime minister, John Howard, does not have to hold a special "double dissolution" election in which all the seats in Australia's powerful upper house would be contested.

The problems of the Australian right are huge. Their "natural" vote is split between the major conservative party, the Liberals, its junior partner, the National party, and the newly emergent One Nation. Politicians in all the major parties, including Labor, are genuinely uncertain of what elections might bring. They will almost certainly bring a Labor victory, but some speculate that the polls will witness the complete destruction of the National party in what was once its Queensland stronghold, and that as many as three party leaders could lose their seats — the National party leader, the Labour party leader, and even the prime minister.

One Nation's nightmare future of Asian cities waxing ever larger on the coast while "real" Australians survive only in the bush, is a fantasy. But it touches the insecurities of those parts of Australian society that feel perplexed and outflanked by change. The mainstream Australian parties have in recent years all been shifting their positions to some degree on immigration and aboriginal issues. But these responses have not assuaged an angry portion of the electorate that is drawn to Ms Hanson's simplifications. Whoever next takes office will have to try to satisfy a less deferential citizenry and one in which a substantial minority will be more openly prejudiced.

When feminists take to playing the fool

Polly Toynbee

FEMINISM is boring. It's predictable, worthy, *passée* and devoid of glamour. It's also social death. Introduce someone as a feminist and people run as from a Christian, vegan or stamp collector. Apostasy, on the other hand, is sexy. This simple truth has been discovered by many a founding feminist over recent years, from Germaine Greer to Kate Millett.

Apostasy brings you new friends, along with exciting new enemies. It makes the world sit up and take notice when everyone is weary of all the old things you used to say. Apostasy is highly profitable, too. And it offers the pleasing delusion of a sudden Damascene conversion. If you are feeling your age, it gives you a better rush than hormone replacement therapy. It brings back the radical martyrdom of your youth, relives the glory days when feminism shocked. Now you can shock again, as Fay Weldon has with her new view that feminism is destructive and men are the ones who need pity. Recently she has commanded some spicy extra headlines with the blithe *pensée* that rape isn't really all that bad.

Weldon is revelling in her rediscovered role as a controversialist. She is also doing well at promoting her latest TV serial, Big Women, about a 1970s all-women publishing house under the distinctly resonant imprint, Medusa. (Who can she mean?) She is fast finding new friends in the rightwing press who welcome her as their latest champion of the male backlash, a friend of men. Hello boys! We all know feminists hate men. Sour, humourless, sexless as the suffragettes, they just go on whingeing, locked in perpetual victimhood. Who wants to be one of them?

I understand the impulse. What makes us feel alive, creative and human is the constant need for novelty. Boredom is the enemy. Viagra journalism demands more, bigger, newer every day. Having been for 11 years a Guardian women's page columnist in the era of the greatly mourned Jill Tweedie, I felt we were breaking new ground. I wouldn't claim the zeitgeist was with us, for the term "Guardian wimmin" was always an epithet. Spat out in loathing, it evoked braless dungarees and clumping earth shoes, lentil-burgers and lesbians, public breast-feeding and private covens of man-hating killjoys.

Undaunted (probably encouraged) by abuse, there was new territory to explore, undiscovered realms of what it meant to be a woman and a man, how different or how much the same. How far does social pressure grotesquely distort and exaggerate genetic gender differences? Mother Nature, red in tooth and claw, was always women's enemy. The yawning absence of women in history illustrated the waste of their brains, talents and bodies since the dawn of time.

I exaggerate a bit, but it sounds like awful old hat now, doesn't it? But what does Weldon mean when she says women have it all and men now need our concern? Some women have it all — money, power, success, four children, partner, Range Rover, labrador, nanny and cottage in Bourton-on-the-Water. On these lucky ones the magazines feast and gloat, though a few Ivana Trumps, Nicola Horlicks and even 100 MPs don't reveal much of the truth about women. But their image sells: women triumphant are a better story than woman downtrodden — again.

Meanwhile the equivalent fashionable image of men is Brassed Off and The Full Monty. Whose side would you be on, Ivana's or Robert Carlyle's? Poor men, no job, no role, no identity, no life. A flavour of that extreme hardship flows over into a new empathy for all men, even those more like Rottweilers than underdogs. It's an odd time to choose — when football testosterone has been wrapped around everything, even the buns and World Cup lettuces in supermarkets.

Weldon is a novelist. She doesn't much like facts. Hard information washes over her, because it's mundane stuff. Women's earnings — 27 per cent less than men's? Women at the bottom of every career ladder? Women — the great majority of the poor? Not very good copy when you're promoting a new TV series.

When Weldon turns her dizzy thoughts to violence, she falls right over a precipice. We're only beginning to uncover the scale of domestic violence, beatings by husbands or rape by lovers. Was the footballer Paul Gascoigne sacked for beating his wife? Shocking, everyone wrote — yet in the end just a part of life's rich tapestry: every country has its folk rhymes about beating women, donkeys and walnut trees. Last week the British Medical Association reported that one in four women are battered at home, and only a third report it to police.

AS FOR Weldon's views on rape, she is hardly making a ground-breaking point when she suggests it's not that bad — because it would be a bit less distressing than having your throat cut or your brains dashed out. To be sure, there have been eccentric feminists who say all penetration is rape. But what an odd time to suggest rape should be made a lesser crime: "I'd like to see it defused for women and deglamourised for men by returning it to the category of aggravated assault." Only recently the Home Office itself sounded the alarm that rape reported to the police has increased four-fold in the past decade, while the number of rapists jailed has dropped, from 24 per cent to just 9 per cent.

Stop press! What's this? A press release from Weldon says she regrets the tape-recorded interview she gave to the Radio Times magazine. Now she says: "I want the offence of rape to be upgraded not down-graded . . . This is what comes of talking about rape to a male journalist."

Well, her distinguished interviewer was Andrew Duncan. Now, conveniently, he's suddenly become another unreliable male, and she is appealing to the sisterhood for sympathy! However, he not only taped his interview, but checked the text back with her as well, especially the surprising bit about rape. Feminism can sometimes be the last refuge of women on the run who've made silly fools of themselves.

Sun sets on the Japanese dream

In the boom years workers enjoyed a high standard of living. Now they are dogged by poverty and unemployment, writes **Alex Brummer**



Last respects . . . the doctors and nurse of an emergency room bow as the corpse of a young suicide victim, whom they tried to revive, is removed

PHOTOGRAPH LEO REGAN

AMID the metropolitan bustle, noise and high rises of Tokyo, the ancient Jindaiji Temple, located in a serene botanical garden on the hydrangea-laced banks of the Tama river, has long offered a sanctuary from the modern industrial state. For centuries the young, praying that their education may be successful, and the infirm, longing for the fountain of youth, have travelled to make prayers for a better life. The price of a few hundred yen buys a carved wooden plaque — some decorated with the image of the lucky Daruma doll — on which the pilgrims inscribe their wishes in bold Japanese characters.

The plaques are hung in a belfry in front of the temple, in the hope that the god of water, Jinja-Daido, will chase away the evil spirits. But lately the tone of the inscriptions has changed. Among the requests for healing and schooling is a new, more cosmopolitan category: the plaintive calls for job security. "I want to get a job, please help me"; "I hope I will do well at my new job and learn to do it quickly"; "May my work and family go well"; and a scrawled message from a practical young woman demanding that the gods help her to become a JAL flight attendant.

The worldly pleas, in a place where the only commerce is the sale of the plaques, incense and hand-crafted candles, provides a sharp reminder of the realities that have now intruded on the most sacred areas of Japanese life. Post-second world war Japan prided itself on creating its own durable form of capitalism in which workers and managers could count on superannuated jobs for life and in which companies clustered together in families — *keiretsus* — where the strong would look after the weak. Under this system the consumer was guaranteed steadily rising living standards, not the stop-go cycles of the Anglo-Saxon economies, and banks were the new citadels of the Pacific — as strong as those of Switzerland, and much larger.

All that is changing, and so rapidly that many Japanese do not know who is to blame, or how to cope. But ordinary people recognise that a comfortable, predictable way of life is coming to a brutal end. Job security is vanishing: spending at the nation's department stores, some of the most lavish in the world, is grinding to a halt. The billions of dollars worth of fine art, which filled warehouses here in the good years, is being siphoned back to New York through the auction houses. The bankruptcy courts are so crowded with cases that they cannot cope. Cash is rapidly escaping from the Japanese banks to other countries.

Daily queues form outside Citibank's Tokyo branches, as citizens seek a safer, American home for their savings. The *keiretsus* are going their separate ways, the banks splitting from industrial companies, leaving the stragglers to survive or just as likely collapse, on their own. Most disturbingly, perhaps, in an echo of the great crash in the United States, the suicide rate is climbing rapidly among all age groups. Many of those taking their lives describe "economic difficulties" as the main reason, with the dishonour of bankruptcy seen as the fastest growing cause.

The self-confidence that Japan built around a manufacturing miracle is gone, and with it the Asian model to which the whole world aspired

In the fashionable Shibuyu district, in the heart of Tokyo and home to the city's chic youth culture, it is hard to detect anything is wrong. The cafés and teashops are filled with young people festooned in designer labels, the boutiques are overflowing with the latest skateboard styles from Santa Cruz, and the famous Oriental Bazaar, which peddles Japanese arts, crafts and antiques, is heavy with locals and tourists making free with their yen.

But as one takes the subway from the core of the city through the endless crowded suburbs, where the washing and futons hanging from the balconies spill on to the passing trains, the mood rapidly changes.

At the end of the subway line is Kawasaki, separated from Tokyo by the river Tamagawa, and a world away from the glittering Ginza and the Manhattan-style towers of Shinjuku. But Kawasaki is the real Japan, the manufacturing heartland on the Tokyo Bay. Here the trucks to and from the petrochemical refineries line up for several hours on the expressway, waiting to pick up or disgorge their loads. Tens of thousands of small workshops, the sub-contractors for the mighty Toshiba and other household electronics names, make the components for the equipment that will eventually be piled up in stores all over the world.

My driver, Yoshihiro Okuyama, is among Japan's new dispossessed. Until a year or so ago Okuyama, who is 47, lived a comfortable life working for more than a decade for a sub-contractor fabricating circuit boards for laptop computers. But as Japan moved into its prolonged period of stagnation the workforce was slashed: "The work from Toshiba became very irregular. I could see the older people leaving, and decided to go before I was made to." Okuyama, from the southernmost part of the country, found his world falling apart around him. He had no job, his wife and three children left him and the only work he could find was driving a cab. Cab-driving is a precarious profession in and around the Tokyo area: the cabbies are the most nomadic drivers in the world, some of whom are so inexpert that they cannot locate landmarks as obvious as the all powerful ministry of finance, or the Tokyo Hilton.

Okuyama has had to scale back his lifestyle. Instead of playing golf with his friends and going to the bar to drink sake, he spends his spare hours, when not behind the wheel, playing pachinko, the pinball gambling game that is a national obsession. He blames the Japanese bureaucrats for his declining fortune. "The ministry of finance is responsible," he says, "they should get rid of the bad loans at the banks."

He will not be voting at the upcoming elections this week. His main ambition now is for his children. "I want to see them joining somewhere with job security, not the sub-contractors. No one at Toshiba headquarters has lost their jobs," he says. On the route to Kawasaki's main shopping streets, many of the small stores are closed, shuttered and derelict, unexpected victims of Japan's fading economy.

At the inviting tea store on the high street, its counters laden with exotic produce, Kunitaro Gom, the elderly proprietor, invites me to share a cup of recently harvested fresh green tea. The staff manning the tea chests and the fancy displays of seaweed, collected from Tokyo Bay, look on slightly bemused. "Business is very bad. It started to go down about seven years ago," Gom observes, and it has been falling by around 5 per cent a year.

"The more expensive sushi restaurants have stopped buying the finest quality seaweed. The corporate market for gift-wrapped teas has dried up," he says regretfully, sipping from a delicate cup. "People in Japan became too greedy during the 'bubble' economy. Now they are starting to wake up to the reality." It is not the government or the bureaucracy which is to blame, Gom says. "It is the people, they put them there." Now aged 64, and after a lifetime in the tea business, a core part of Japan's traditional culture, Gom is puzzled about the future. "Maybe a relative will take it over, or we might just shut down." Before leaving he insists on handing over a small presentation pack of his choicest teas: "For you and your family," he says.

At the Matsumoto Construction Company a few kilometres away, the metal pipes and equipment piled up in the yard are rusting away; the staff sit around in a grim, desultory manner. The company has been paving the roads of Kawasaki for more than 30 years, but the work has dried up. The president's spouse, elegantly clad in plaid and with immaculately groomed hair, is only too pleased to practise her English; she can no longer afford to travel to Europe, as she did in the boom years.

"This office is very old," she says. "So when the times were good we wanted to buy land to build again, for our children. But the prices were so high we couldn't afford it. Now land prices are falling, but we don't have the business any longer." The Matsumoto family is anxiously awaiting the government's new stimulation package, which has just been approved by the parliament. New roads can be built, with taxpayers' funds, if they are needed or not. Like many of her compatriots Mrs Matsumoto blames the bureaucrats at the much hated ministry of finance for the "bad management" of the economy. It is because of them that she can no longer afford a Scottish holiday by Loch Ness.

Back in Tokyo, Taketo Yamazak, who came to the capital as a boy of 15 to make his fortune in the shoe business, has been relatively successful. He has created a mid-market designer shoe business, which supports not just himself but his sons. The family runs a Mercedes, and in their modest third-floor apartment, in the north-eastern suburbs, his wife has created her own private sanctuary: a room built from the best Japanese woods, decorated with finely woven raffia rugs, to entertain privileged guests with the tea ceremony. "It is a philosophy, a way of life," the energetic mother of four explains.

But sitting on flat cushions around the low table, which is the centrepiece of activity in the apartment, Yamazak is a disappointed man. With the black and white photographs of his ancestors staring down from the walls, and a well made black leather pump in front of him, he explains how he has had to cut staff and production by 50 per cent because of the recession. His main customers, the expensive department stores have slashed the number of orders.

Yamazak also is being crippled by the weak yen. The equipment he buys from Britain has soared in price, as have the fine shoe leathers he buys in Italy: at the same time he is expected to cut the price of his product because of the severe competition for orders. A thick-set, dignified man, Yamazak is philosophical: "I have my hands, I can always make shoes even if the business goes wrong."

Like many Japanese, the Yamazak family has stopped spending, except for essentials. Uncertainty has pervaded the comfortable life they built for themselves. Not so long ago the Japanese felt they could conquer the world with their high standard of living, the strong yen and the ability to buy anything — from Californian real estate to Van Goghs — by the yard. But the recession and the implosion of the banking system has swept all that away. The jobless rate is rising by 300,000 a month, more that in Britain during the worst of the 1990-92 recession. Low interest rates make it impossible to build savings and a broken stock market means that the value of pensions has been decimated.

Young people distrust the job-for-life promise and are increasingly learning new professional skills so that they can survive in the workplace shakeout. A businesswoman, who grew up in the period immediately after the second world war, confides that she had not felt so scared since the American occupation, when she would go to bed with hunger pains. That is no longer a problem: Japan is still a land of extraordinary plenty. But the self-confidence that Japan built around a manufacturing miracle has been destroyed, and with it the Asian model to which, not so long ago, the whole world aspired.

Figures of failure

- Bankruptcies up 31 per cent
- Unemployment up to a post-war high of 4.1 per cent
- Suicides up 10 per cent
- Department store sales down 17.3 per cent
- Number of new cars registered down 19.4 per cent
- Trips abroad down 14.8 per cent
- New houses built down 11.9 per cent
- Job offers down 8.8 per cent
- Sales of home electronics down 25.3 per cent

Figures are for March 1998, except suicide figure (first quarter 1998) and unemployment figure (April 1998). Percentage changes are given as compared to same period in the previous year. Courtesy of the Economic Planning Agency of Japan and the Japanese National Police Agency.

The IMF: one size doesn't fit all

The tailor-made solution to economic crises may be coming apart at the seams, say **Larry Elliott** and **Alex Brummer**

FROM the offices of the International Monetary Fund in downtown Washington DC, the ambush of the Thai baht by currency speculators last June looked like one of those brief but violent tropical storms. That great edifice, globalisation, had sprung a leak, but the problem required only running repairs.

Twelve months later, things look rather different. No longer is it a case of damp in the attic: whole rooms are deep in rising flood waters. Amid all the soul-searching, the IMF — one of the main architects of the new world order — has come under rigorous scrutiny. A crisis that started in Thailand has affected Malaysia, Indonesia, South Korea, Japan, India, Russia, South Africa, New Zealand and Australia. Nobody knows for sure which country will be next in the firing line.

The IMF has come under fire from economists across the political spectrum. Nobel laureate Milton Friedman led the charge from the right. He accused the IMF of being interventionist; its meddling with the invisible hand of the free market preventing economies from correcting themselves.

From the economics mainstream came the charge that the IMF made a series of bad decisions. Reacting to its closure of Indonesian banks last autumn the Harvard economist Jeffrey Sachs said: "Instead of dousing the fire, the IMF in effect screamed fire in the theatre."

From the left came two lines of attack: first, the IMF got it wrong about globalisation; second, that it is in cahoots with the United States Treasury to force Asian countries to adopt one-size-fits-all American capitalism. The big currency devaluations have made Asian assets cheap, while moves to secure complete liberalisation of capital will make it child's play for US companies to pick up viable companies at bargain-basement prices.

Faced with these criticisms, the IMF fought back. In the Financial Times earlier this year its managing director, Michel Camdessus, was asked why it had imposed its same old belt-tightening adjustment programmes on Thailand, Indonesia and Korea — programmes that were quite inappropriate to their present needs.

"Mr Camdessus became indignant. The new agreements represented a marked departure from the IMF's traditional approach. They were built not on a set of austerity measures, but rather on far-reaching structural reforms to strengthen financial systems, increase transparency, open markets and restore market confidence."

These are not universally held views, even within the IMF. Joseph Stiglitz, chief economist of the World Bank, voiced the misgivings of the dissidents. At the start of this year he made his feelings about the IMF austerity packages plain when he argued that "you don't want to push these countries into severe recession. One ought to focus on ... things that caused the crisis, not on things that make it more difficult to deal with."

The IMF — not used to having its behaviour challenged — snapped back. But Stiglitz would not be silenced. One by one he laid into the sacred cows of the IMF: first, the cavalier way in which the emphasis on macro-economic stability ignored growth and jobs; then there was the Camdessus argument that the need to restore confidence to the currency necessitated high interest rates. "Are measures that weaken the economy, especially the financial system, likely to restore confidence," Stiglitz asked.

There was more. Macro-economic policy needed to be expanded beyond "a single-minded focus on inflation and budget deficits; the set of policies that underlay the Washington consensus are not sufficient for macroeconomic stability or long-term development".

The IMF is not used to such scorn. It has long enjoyed the reputation of a lean and focused bureaucracy staffed by the world's best economic and financial minds. The Fund's view has been that the economy of one country is very much like any other and that by applying its rational, neo-liberal economic model, it could restore a measure of economic stability.

Created at the 1944 Bretton Woods Conference in New Hampshire the IMF's remit was at first a narrow one. It was the world's central bank, the lender of last resort to member countries. Most of its clients were advanced industrial countries such as Britain, and the system worked reasonably well, fixed exchange rates making it relatively easy to police. All that changed in 1972 when Richard Nixon uncoupled the dollar from gold.

The new world was rather different, primarily because the end of fixed rates brought new opportunities for speculators to take on the weak links in the financial system. The fabled "Gnomes of Zurich", who undid the British government led by Harold Wilson in 1967, were now joined by fellow spirits in financial markets from New York to Tokyo, with relatively large capital sums at their disposal. British and American borrowings from the IMF in the late 1970s hurt; the richer industrial countries would at all costs avoid similar humiliation. The IMF would still supervise their economies, but capital shortages would be met by borrowing from the increasingly free and open private sector capital markets.

But just as there was talk that the IMF might have outlived its usefulness, the Mexican crisis broke. In 1982 the Mexican government reneged on its debts with private sector banks, precipitating a crisis across Latin America that threatened the Western banking system. The IMF stepped in as lender of the last resort and found itself a new role. No longer banker to the industrial countries, it discovered a global clientele among the developing countries. Instead of making short-term bridging loans it was in for the long haul.

When the Berlin Wall came down and the former Soviet Union and its satellites aspired to capitalism the IMF acquired almost two dozen new clients. Despite its doctrine of fiscal austerity, it added hundreds of new economists to its staff, doubled the size of its Washington HQ and increased its budget to $507 million in the 1997-98 financial year.

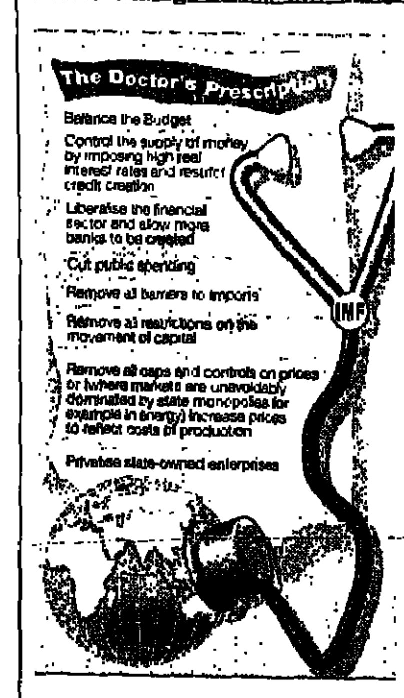
But if it had grown in size its lending programmes and approach to member countries remained the same. Its operations were shrouded in secrecy, its advice to governments private, its focus on fiscal deficits, monetary policy and inflation — fundamental macro-economic reform.

Even before the IMF started throwing its weight around in Asia it was not short of critics. Robert Wade, professor of political economics at Brown University in the US, and the financial consultant Frank Veneroso argued that Asian economies were different from those the IMF usually deals with. They had high levels of saving, which were recycled as loans to corporations — companies are closely linked with governments. "Because of this difference, IMF 'austerity' and 'financial liberalisation' will have higher costs and smaller benefits in Asia than elsewhere," they said.

The IMF believes that, in the end, it will be vindicated. It points out — rightly — that the lack of an equivalent body deepened the global crash of the 1930s. Critics argue, however, that one result of the 1930s was the formation of a Keynesian international system fortified by capital controls.

The IMF's recent actions have even given die-hard free-traders reason to question what it thinks it is doing. According to Jagdish Bhagwati, an Indian expert on world trade: "It is a lot of ideological humbug to say that without free portfolio capital mobility, somehow the world cannot function and growth rates will collapse."

Funny money ... impatient crowds demand to be allowed into the Bank Central Asia in Jakarta, hoping to withdraw money that is not there PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID GRAY



FOREIGN EXCHANGES

	Sterling rates July 6	Sterling rates June 29
Australia	2.6676-2.6744	2.7343-2.7405
Austria	20.93-20.95	21.22-21.25
Belgium	61.34-61.46	62.21-62.32
Canada	2.4211-2.4241	2.4473-2.4507
Denmark	11.33-11.35	11.48-11.50
France	9.97-9.98	10.10-10.12
Germany	2.9751-2.9790	3.0148-3.0183
Hong Kong	12.75-12.76	12.89-12.90
Ireland	1.1809-1.1836	1.1990-1.2011
Italy	2,910-2,953	N/A N/A
Japan	230.28-230.63	235.62-235.94
Netherlands	3.3542-3.3581	3.3984-3.4022
New Zealand	3.1910-3.1982	3.2338-3.2255
Norway	12.64-12.67	12.78-12.80
Portugal	304.49-304.93	308.68-309.01
Spain	252.57-252.85	255.90-256.23
Sweden	13.25-13.28	13.23-13.26
Switzerland	2.5034-2.5070	2.5376-2.5420
USA	1.6459-1.6474	1.6652-1.6622
ECU	1.5038-1.5063	N/A N/A

FTSE100 Share Index up 109.8 at 5990.3. FTSE 250 Index up 67.2 at 5[illegible]. Gold down $0.60 at $293.35.

France seeks kick start from World Cup

Peter Gaskell

IF FRANCE does not achieve World Cup triumph, it will not be for lack of effort on the part of the government. The authorities have put in a substantial financial investment, aimed at adding France's name to the select band of six so far to have lifted football's biggest prize.

As if anticipating national triumph, the French economy has continued the recovery that began in spring last year, aided by a surge in exports. Policy-makers expect a 3 per cent growth rate for 1998 and 1999, while even the most obdurate enemy — high unemployment — is weakening. From 12.6 per cent at the nadir of 1997, the rate was down to 11.9 per cent in May, and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Economic Outlook last month forecast 11.3 per cent for 1999.

In France the centralising ethos that dates back to Colbert in the 17th century is alive and well, though not as ideologically unchallenged as before, and top managers trained in the *grandes écoles* still glide seamlessly from positions as ministerial advisers to being captains of industry.

Not surprising, therefore, that the French centralising tradition should swing into action for the World Cup, in the hope that it would boost the economy.

What has been spent and what are the likely benefits? The total cost of staging the World Cup has run to Fr9.4 billion ($1.5 billion), of which 57 per cent has been financed by the public sector. Official figures show that the central government share amounted to Fr3.1 billion. Of that, Fr1.25 billion was spent on the new 80,000-seat Stade de France in Saint-Denis.

Indeed, the municipality of St-Denis, a traditionally poor area bedevilled by high unemployment and racial tension, would appear to be the most permanent beneficiary. Around the new stadium are a new sports centre, cinema complex, two new railway stations and a network of new roads. Two-thirds of the 1,500 long-term jobs created by the World Cup are in the Communist-run municipality.

In the regional centres such as Nantes, Montpellier and Marseille, the investment promotion agency Datar has taken potential foreign investors on football-linked visits in an effort to clinch deals.

Experts say that once the event is over the boost to the economy will be no more than a blip — "too small to be measured", according to an official at the Insee national statistics agency.

If France were to lift the trophy, the invisible boost to economic performance and productivity would be considerable. It would be Le Feelgood factor with a vengeance.

Turkey fails to face facts over EU snub

Marie Jégo

TURKEY has decided to snub Europe. The country feels isolated after its application to join the European Union was turned down by the 15 member countries at the Luxembourg summit last December, and is currently in the grip of domestic tensions.

The upbeat note of the EU summit in Cardiff in June, when Paris and London tried to heal the wounds of Luxembourg by calling for "more positive" relations with Turkey, has not changed anything.

But while Turkey has no intention, in the immediate future, of reopening the political lines of communication with the EU, it will continue, as its deputy prime minister, Bulent Ecevit, has pointed out, to "press home its entitlement to membership".

Described as "a disgrace", "a slap in the face", "prejudice", "a blunder" — even Turkey's most fervent Europhiles feel bitter about what they call the EU's "discriminatory" attitude towards them. They argue that geographically Turkey is part of Europe, and that culturally it has the same values — after all, the Ottoman Empire succeeded the Byzantine Empire, and the secular republic that Kemal Ataturk introduced seven decades ago was based on the ideals of the French Revolution.

They also point out that Turkey's dynamic economy — last year's growth rate of 8 per cent was one of the highest in the world — makes it just as good a candidate for EU membership as the former Soviet-bloc countries whose candidacy has been accepted.

The real reason why they are being kept out, say the Turks, is that Europe sees itself above all as "a Christian club", and feels threatened by a possible influx of immigrants from Anatolia.

Such fears do indeed exist. Germany, for example, which paid a heavy price for reunification and has more than 2 million Turks on its territory, would, a German diplomat said, be "unable to accept any increase in the number of non-Germans among its population".

Even so, the Turks are guilty of exaggeration when they talk of an "injustice". They are too inclined to overlook the fact that Turkey has simply failed to meet the political and economic criteria necessary for membership. There has been no improvement in human rights, nor any progress towards settling the Kurdish problem.

The country's human rights record is chilling. According to Amnesty International, six people died in police custody during the first six months of this year, nine "disappeared" after being arrested, and 20 were victims of extrajudicial executions. The authorities have also recently imprisoned journalists and writers such as Haluk Gerger, Esber Yamugdereli and Ragit Duran, whose works are regarded as a threat to Turkey's unity.

Even more alarming is the confirmation of links between the mafia, the military and the ultra-nationalists that came to light as a result of the attempt on the life of the leading human rights campaigner Akin Birdal in May. His attackers, ultra-nationalists in the pay of a notorious mafioso, admitted after their arrest that they had received training at a police barracks.

An unofficial pact between ultra-nationalists, organised crime and the military, fuelled by the war in the largely Kurdish southeast of the country, could in the long run prove more of a threat to national unity than a genuine debate on the issues facing Turkey.

Such a debate is virtually ruled out the moment any of the five great taboos are mentioned: the role of the army, Islamic political activity, relations with Greece, the Cyprus question, and the problem of the Kurds and minorities in general.

Although there is undeniably a greater freedom of expression in Turkey today, the most important issues are never addressed. Although the regime has democratic trappings — secularism and a parliamentary system in which parties of either left or right are freely elected — it is doubtful whether it can really be described as civilian.

The army's influence is widespread, and in its capacity as a major commercial player — Oyak, set up in 1961 to help army officers and their families, is now an economic heavyweight — it was quick to react to the emergence of Islamist business leaders.

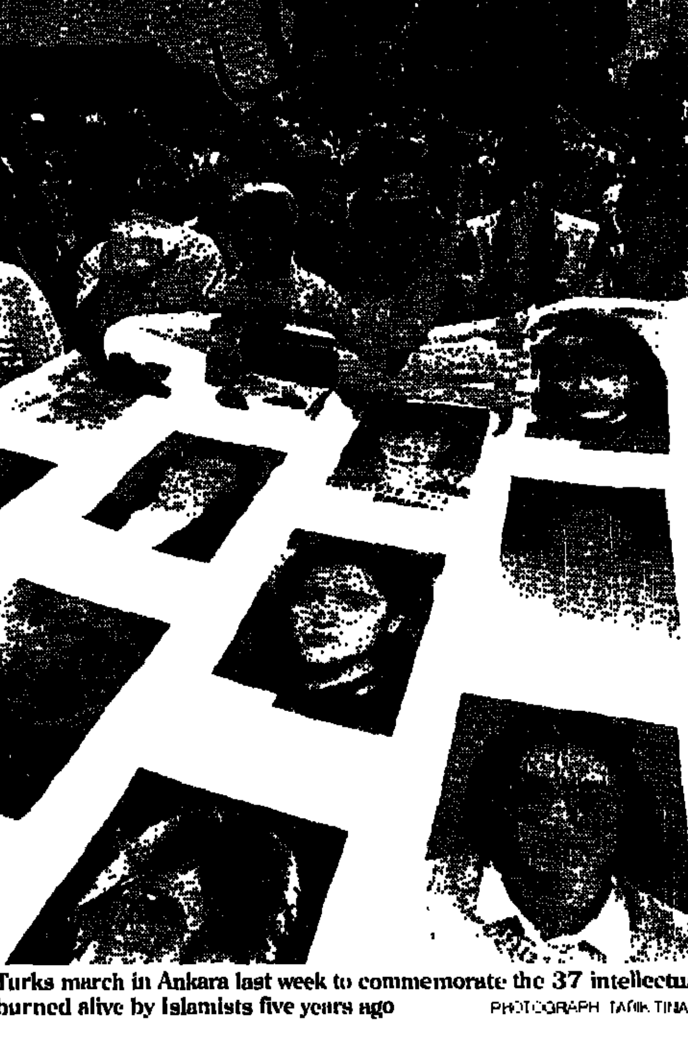
By confiscating political power from civilians the generals have discredited the already badly weakened traditional parties. The early election due next April, far from ending the political instability typical of the coalition governments that have run Turkey for the past 50 years, will simply allow the Virtue party, the Islamic Welfare's successor, to corner more votes — always supposing it is allowed to survive until then.

Given that power in Turkey is concentrated in the hands of a few generals, they are unlikely to agree to the transfer of sovereignty that is inherent in becoming a member of the EU.

The army's crackdown on Islamists, mounting tension with Greece and the crisis sparked by the French parliament's decision to recognise the Armenian genocide at the hands of the Turks in 1915 have cramped Turkey's diplomatic responses and made it even less likely that the authorities will try to open up the country.

If Brussels wants to help Turkey find a way forward, it should offer Ankara further compromises. After all, as a French geopolitical expert once said, the EU is "a machine for manufacturing compromises".

(June 27)



Turks march in Ankara last week to commemorate the 37 intellectuals burned alive by Islamists five years ago PHOTOGRAPH: TARIK TINAZAY

Miners bring protest to Yeltsin's door

Agathe Duparc in Moscow

THE area in front of Moscow's White House has been the scene of a strange standoff over the past two weeks. Some 300 pinched-faced, dishevelled miners have been camping below government officials' windows to protest against the non-payment of their salaries.

They have set up house in makeshift tents 50 metres from the entrance to the building. Their only washing facilities are three leaky buckets nailed to a wooden board. Meals consist of kasha (porridge), brought to them by sympathetic old-age pensioners. Each morning and evening a stream of civil servants pass the campers without so much as a glance in their direction.

One month after the miners' protest movement blocked railway lines throughout Russia, promises have not been kept. There have been continuing delays in the payment of salaries despite assurances from the authorities. That is why the miners organised their picket in front of the White House.

They arrived on June 11 from Vorkuta in the far north, Kuzbass in Siberia and Rostov-on-Don in southern Russia with money contributed by local inhabitants. "Boris: we supported you, and we will get you out," reads one of their banners directed at President Yeltsin.

"On June 12, Yakov Urinson [the finance minister] and Boris Nemtsov [the deputy prime minister] told us to go to hell, and insisted we stop calling on Yeltsin to resign," says Sviatoslav, a father of two who has spent six of his 22 years down Vorkutinskaya 40 mine. "Since then there's been nothing. Not a single minister has deigned to wind down the window of his Volvo or Mercedes."

Sviatoslav is disgusted; "Just before the 1996 presidential elections, Yeltsin dressed up as a miner so he could come down and visit the bottom of our mine. Then he went straight to the director's office and signed *ukases* [decrees]. We all voted for him, but nothing has changed."

In the past 12 months Sviatoslav has never been paid in full. He is owed a total of 34,000 roubles ($5,500). He says he has managed to hang on with the help of his mother-in-law's pension.

The White House demonstrators have been visited by a handful of sympathisers. A retired army officer talked of the "genocide of the Russian people" and gave them a supply of dried-out Soviet cigarettes. A neurosurgeon, calling himself a "patriot", offered to massage the backs of the weary miners. Some party leaders have also showed their faces, including the Communist Gennady Zyuganov, who was given a cool reception.

On June 26, a pop singer and member of the Duma, the lower house of parliament, Yossif Kobzon, who is notorious for his links with the mafia, turned up with a group of bodyguards and "businessmen". His gift to the miners was a song assuring them they had his sincere support.

(June 28-29)

Stepping out of francophone Africa

EDITORIAL

FRANCE has finally decided to venture forth from its traditional sphere of influence in Africa — the French-speaking countries. That was the message from the French president, Jacques Chirac, during his recent trip to southern Africa, which took him to Namibia, South Africa, Mozambique and Angola.

It is a commendable decision. It does not mean that France intends to abandon some of its oldest friends in francophone Africa. But Chirac's tour illustrated two shifts of policy.

First, France's political and industrial leaders realise they will have to take account of the new state of play in Africa: with the end of the cold war and the demise of apartheid, Angola and South Africa have become key regional powers.

And second, by reforming its system of aid to Africa, France has begun to "normalise" — read: clean up — its relations with its longest-standing African partners.

France's business community got in on the act some time before its political leaders, realising that southern Africa, as well as various parts of English-speaking Africa, offered a number of attractive markets.

It is often forgotten that a country such as Uganda, thought to be in the front line of the "pernicious" influence of Britain and the United States in Africa, has for some time now attracted at least as much French investment as the Democratic Republic of Congo, which, when it was still called Zaire, used to be regarded as a key element of France's influence in the continent.

South Africa is now France's main trading partner in sub-Saharan Africa, well ahead of Ivory Coast. And Angola seems poised to become one of France's main oil suppliers, if not the biggest.

There is a discrepancy between this fact of life and France's image as a country desperately clinging on to a small area that it believes the United States wants to wrest from it. In fact, the amount of US government aid going to Africa has for some time now either remained constant or declined. And there is not, as yet, any evidence that either the Congo or Rwanda has become a happy hunting ground for US investors.

France's Africa policy has become more wide-ranging, a fact illustrated by the "downsizing" of its military presence on the continent, by Chirac's trip and by aid reforms introduced by the prime minister, Lionel Jospin.

A whole world is disappearing; one in which a "special" relationship with a "friendly" head of state — whose budget was subsidised by France — would result in his granting a procurement contract to a French company. No one, surely, will mourn the passing of that system.

(July 2)

New film tsar hankers after the past

Pierre Daum in Sochi on the ambitious leader of Russian cinema

"WE SHOULD unite to restore the Russian cinema to its former glory," said Nikita Mikhalkov during the closing ceremony of the ninth Open Russian Festival on June 14.

His message was loud and clear: if professional Russian film-makers want to get their industry out of the doldrums in which it has been languishing for the past 10 years, they will have to forget their divisions and rally to a single leader — none other than Mikhalkov himself.

He chose the right moment for his harangue: participants at the festival, which was held at the Black Sea resort of Sochi — once the favourite holiday destination of the Soviet *nomenklatura* — knew that there were signs of a renaissance in the Russian cinema.

The number of films made each year, which had slumped to 20 in 1996, rose to 53 last year. And although the industry is still a long way off the 400 features that it used to turn out annually during the cinematic heyday of the *ancien régime*, the upturn seems set to continue. About 70 projects were scheduled for this year, of which about 30 are believed to have been completed already.

With state subsidies remaining constant at about $1.5 million a year, what has proved a shot in the arm for the industry is the continuing expansion of television networks, particularly in the 89 regions making up the Russian Federation.

Now that television has become the main lever of power, every local potentate feels the need to run one or more channels. These channels have been buying up a lot of films, and some, like the largest private channel, NTV, have started investing in film production.

It would also seem that the crucial problem of dwindling ticket sales (average attendance levels have fallen to 4 per cent) may soon be overcome. The spectacular success of Moscow's Kodak-Kinomir cinema, the first auditorium to be equipped with European-standard facilities, has amply demonstrated with its 70 per cent attendance level that many Russians are prepared to pay up to $15 for a ticket. As a result there are numerous plans to refurbish existing cinemas and start building multiplexes.

As these first stirrings of a recovery were getting under way, Mikhalkov was completing his takeover of the Russian Film-Makers' Union during an extraordinary congress held at the Kremlin at the end of May.

To gauge the significance of his move one needs to go back to an event that was regarded as one of the first signs of perestroika: the historic 1986 congress of the same union.

Held in the Kremlin's large conference hall it was notable for its scathing criticism of the old guard of union leaders. Only one person spoke up for the apparatchiks of the Soviet cinema: Nikita Mikhalkov. He was booed by his colleagues and still has painful memories of that humiliating experience.

Eleven years on, in December last year, when the film industry was on its last legs, representatives of the union's various local committees approached Mikhalkov for help because he is the only Russian director with an international reputation — thanks to Dark Eyes, which was acclaimed at Cannes in 1987, Close To Eden, which won the Golden Lion at Venice in 1991, and Burnt By The Sun, which got the Oscar for the best foreign language film in 1994.

He agreed to help, but only on condition that he would have *carte blanche* to carry out a complete overhaul of the union and, in the process, of the film industry as a whole. He persuaded the union's 4,500 members to come from all over the country to a congress at the end of May — in the very same conference hall where he had been humiliated in 1986.

MIKHALKOV denounced the archaic methods and fragmentation of the various structures that govern film production in Russia — the Cinematography Committee, which runs the state budget, the various studios, the union and so on — and suggested that all direct state intervention should be wound up and a "Film Foundation" set up under the direct stewardship of the union, of which he himself would be the de facto president.

The foundation would centralise all the union's financial sources: income from its properties, television broadcasting rights, and taxes on the sales of videos and on cinema tickets.

Mikhalkov makes no secret of the criteria that will be used when channelling these funds into production. The emphasis will be on commercial cinema ("No more films for a narrow circle of film buffs"), but with a "moralising" proviso — it is only, he says, by asserting the positive values of the Russian people, and more particularly by drawing on the great Slav epics, that the Russian cinema will become great again.

A few isolated voices tried in vain to protest against this complete takeover by a single man. But Mikhalkov undoubtedly raised the expectations of most of his colleagues. As well as being showered with applause, he pushed through three reforms that reflected his alarmingly authoritarian tendencies: the president of the union will now hold the position for life; he alone will be responsible for appointing the secretaries, who from now on will not have to be union members. Thus, of the 12 secretaries appointed, 11 are lawyers, bankers, business people and close friends of Mikhalkov.

Russian media analysts believe that Mikhalkov's ambitions do not stop here, and wonder whether his job as boss of the union might not be a stepping stone to greater things.

Mikhalkov's response to such speculation is: "It's indecent to talk of elections when we now still have an excellent president" — not, it has to be admitted, the most categorical of denials.

(June 18)



The reel thing . . . Nikita Mikhalkov, centre, the authoritarian Russian director and president of the Film-Maker's Union, at a Cossack parade in Krasnodar in 1995 PHOTOGRAPH: J P GUILLOTEAU/L'EXPRESS

Shelter from the storm

Philippe Dagen

IT WAS supposed to be a straightforward exhibition of the kind often organised in French provincial towns during the summer. A Toulouse art gallery, Les Abattoirs, and the town council of Rabastens in southwest France invited the Atelier Van Lieshout to put on a show in Rabastens. The Atelier was founded by a 35-year-old Dutch artist, Joep Van Lieshout, with a view to inventing what he calls "housing units" — cramped spaces, hostile shapes, receptacles that provide shelter, or incarceration. In short, Lieshout's work is a critique of our compartmentalised society.

The exhibition took its title, The Good, The Bad And The Ugly, from the Sergio Leone western. Similar shows have been organised by Lieshout in Rotterdam, Minneapolis, Eindhoven and Münster. The Rabastens exhibition consisted of several "units" (polyester volumes in the shape of helmets or insulation chambers), a "weapon and bomb workshop", an "alcohol and medicine workshop", and a Mercedes with a wooden cannon mounted on it. No attempt was made to conceal economic, sexual or military symbols.

On June 5 the exhibition was opened without incident by Rabastens' Socialist mayor, Alain Brest. Three days later the mayor issued an order: "The Van Lieshout exhibition will be banned from the territory of the commune [of Rabastens] as of 2pm, Monday June 8, 1998."

This move was sparked by "the symbols used in it (types of behaviour, violence, weapons, alcohol, drugs, sex), which have deeply shocked the population. This is no artistic claim to our attention, but an act of deliberate provocation aimed at the people of Rabastens and society in general."

The good town of Rabastens seems not to want to admit that "things" such as weapons, alcohol, drugs and sex exist. One can only suppose there are no hunters, drunks or lovers in the town. The ban caused an immediate outcry. Some inhabitants of Rabastens supported Brest, others his deputy in charge of culture, Gérard Baïsse, who described the ban as "a terrorist measure".

Lieshout and Pascal Pique, the head of Les Abattoirs, suggested that there should be a campaign to explain the show and that the Mercedes with the cannon on top should be placed in the courtyard, so as not to offend anyone. The mayor responded by offering to move the exhibition to the football stadium, forgetting that this, too, could be interpreted as a symbol of violence. Pique and Lieshout refused.

They were supported by one of Rabastens's deputy mayors, the Communist Daniel Enguilabert: "Sending the show to the stadium would add insult to injury. It won't be able to survive if it is exiled." Meanwhile the organisers are looking for a venue in another town.

(June 28-29)

Prometheus hopes to stay on his pedestal

Harry Bellet

ON MAY 2, 1938, a right-wing daily, Le Matin, launched a virulent campaign against a sculpture by Jacques Lipchitz (1891-1973), Prométhée Etranglant Le Vautour (Prometheus Strangling The Vulture). The state-commissioned sculpture had been standing in front of the Palais de la Découverte in Paris since the 1937 Exposition Universelle.

On May 15 the same paper printed on its front page a photograph of the sculpture, which had been destroyed, with the caption: "At last! Prometheus has left his pedestal."

The sculpture got up people's noses, as the historian Pascal Ory pointed out in an exhibition catalogue, entitled Face à l'Histoire: "Lipchitz combined in the sculpture two themes of the preceding years that were eminently polemical, in the literal sense — the theme, going back to 1931, of Prometheus as a liberator of the human race, an explicit tribute to those who, during the Age of Enlightenment, fought obscurantism in all its forms; and the theme of David vanquishing, in 1933, a Goliath whose identity is made quite clear by the presence of a swastika."

On May 20, 1998, the culture minister, Catherine Trautmann, opened an exhibition of about 20 monumental sculptures by Lipchitz in the gardens of the Palais-Royal in Paris. The show includes a bronze version of Prométhée, which is smaller than the original. There is also a David and Goliath.

It is a well-deserved, yet short-lived, comeback by Lipchitz — the show ends on August 31. It does not include La Fuite (Flight), a sculpture that he started working on during the exodus of May 1940 and which was the only piece of work he took with him when he went into exile in the United States.

Lipchitz — a Jew, a former admirer of the Soviet regime (the Russian artistic commission turned down his project for a monument to the October Revolution), and a sworn enemy of the Nazis — had no choice but to leave the country.

But he did not give up the fight. While in New York in 1941 he sculpted The Rape of Europa. In it, Europa, a very young woman, stabs a bull, which takes the form of Hitler. Lipchitz certainly did not like fascists.

Neither does Trautmann, whose idea it was to let the French have another, if brief, look at the Prométhée sculpture, which their grandparents' generation had confiscated from them.

(June 30)

Le Monde

Directeur: Jean-Marie Colombani

We Came, We Saw, We Were Changed

OPINION
Michael Kelly

AT THE close of the climactic day of President Clinton's trip to China last week, the president's national security adviser, Samuel R. Berger, said: "I think this has been quite an extraordinary day in the evolution of U.S.-China relations." He was right, unfortunately.

Throughout the end years of the Cold War, the United States adhered to a China policy rooted in the idea that a limited friendship between two adversaries was not a bad thing when it served to trouble a third, more dangerous, enemy. This rationale disappeared with the Soviet Union.

Since then, American policy has attempted to deal with China as it was — a Communist totalitarian state guided by an ideology inimical to American interests and repugnant to American values — but to also encourage China's evolution toward a more democratic society. The principal element of this policy was to link the blessings of trade and international recognition that Beijing coveted to its behavior in the areas of human rights, free trade and nuclear weapons proliferation.

This is the course that the White House says triumphed in Beijing. Actually, it died there, finally, and a new China policy was born. The extraordinary evolution that Berger noted was not China's, but ours. As critics have warned would happen, we did not change China; China changed us.

Our new policy is to regard China and the United States as "partners, not adversaries," in the words of President Jiang Zemin. In this policy, what Clinton called "partnership and honest friendship" with China is of such immense importance "for the future sake of the world" that the United States must accept China as it is. The desired end of the old, linkage-based policy was to force improvements in the behavior of the Chinese government. Under the new policy, the United States will no longer presume to force change, only to speak its mind. "We do not," the president assured his hosts, "seek to impose our view on others."

No, we don't. We agree, as friends do, to disagree. Agreeing to disagree is an end in itself. We will, from time to time, forthrightly express our disagreement with some of Beijing's practices, and Beijing will forthrightly express its disagreement with our disagreement, and we will all get on with our business, which is mainly business.

The clearest illustration of this policy at work occurred when Clinton addressed the delicate subject of Tiananmen Square. "For all our agreements, we still disagree about the meaning of what happened then," said Clinton with exquisite tact. Yes, we do disagree. We say that "what happened then," nine years ago, was that the tanks of the People's Liberation Army murdered unarmed students whose only crime was to gather in a cry for democracy. The People's Republic of China says, as Jiang informed Clinton, that "had the Chinese government not taken the resolute measures, then we could not have enjoyed the stability that we are enjoying today."

And that is that. 'Nuff said. Let's move on. How do we move on? Clinton offered two steps by which the United States and China might "deal with such disagreements" as that which arose over the late unpleasantness at Tiananmen, "and still succeed in the important work of deepening our friendship and our sense of mutual respect."

First, he said, Americans must "acknowledge the painful moments in our own history when fundamental human rights were denied," and "we must say that we know, still we have to continue to work to advance the dignity and freedom and equality of our own people." Second, he said, "we must understand and respect the enormous challenges China has faced in trying to move forward against great odds, with a clear memory of the setbacks suffered in periods of instability."

So. The lesson of Tiananmen Square is not that China's dictators must change. It is that Americans must change. We must be more sensitive. We must acknowledge our sins. We must be patient. We must not judge lest we be judged. And what must the People's Republic of China do? About this, the president said not a word.

What happened in Beijing was that the men who rule China learned that they may do as they wish. Linkage is dead. The United States will no longer seek to force change in China. China's government may deal with democracy's advocates as it sees fit. It may continue to require its female citizens to undergo forced abortions. It may continue its armed occupation of Tibet, and press forward with its goal of enfolding Taiwan.

We will express our disagreements, and then move on, in partnership and honest friendship. We have our vision and the men that Bill Clinton once called "aging rulers with undisguised contempt for democracy" have their vision, and we do not seek to impose.

U.N. Accuses Congo Over Hutu Massacres

John M. Goshko in New York

A U.N. HUMAN rights team charged last week that Congo President Laurent Kabila's forces massacred scores of Rwandan Hutu refugees in 1996 and 1997, and it called for an inter national tribunal to prosecute those responsible for "serious violations of human rights."

The charges were contained in a long-awaited report by the team, which was withdrawn from Congo by Secretary General Kofi Annan after months of harassment by the Kabila government. Annan made the report public following an internal debate among U.N. officials about whether its release would further worsen U.N. relations with Kabila, who led a successful guerrilla campaign that last year overthrew the former long-time dictator of Zaire, President Mobutu Sese Seko.

The main points of the report have been known for some time. It supports charges by independent human rights groups that Kabila's forces and their allies from the Tutsi-dominated army of neighboring Rwanda murdered thousands of Hutu refugees, including women and children, who had fled into Congo. Rwanda has a long history of animosity between Tutsis and Hutus, and the killings in Congo allegedly were part of a Tutsi retaliation for the 1994 Hutu genocide campaign that killed more than 500,000 Rwandan Tutsis.

The report acknowledges that the restrictions placed on the investigators by Congolese officials made a full-scale inquiry impossible and forced the team to rely on limited, often second-hand information. Nevertheless, it said, enough information is available to implicate Kabila's forces, the Alliance for Democratic Force for the Liberation of the Congo (AFDL), and elements of the Rwandan army in attacks against refugee camps in eastern Zaire. When the refugees, mostly unarmed civilians, fled, they were hunted down and killed, the report said.

But, it added, Congolese authorities actively resisted an investigation into who was responsible for "the serious violations of human rights and grave breaches of humanitarian law which occurred in its territory . . . In short [the Congo government] did not want the investigation mission and failed to give its full and entire co-operation.

"Consequently, the interests of justice can only be served by endowing an international tribunal with competence over these crimes," the report said.

The Security Council already has established a special war crimes tribunal, headquartered at Arusha in Zimbabwe, to investigate and try persons involved in the 1994 massacre of Tutsis. But that court has come under heavy criticism for a variety of alleged legal and administrative failings, and it is considered doubtful here that the Security Council would broaden its mandate to cover the Congo killings.

Reed Brody, a former member of the Congo human rights team and now an official of the private Human Rights Watch, said in an interview that the role of Rwanda and, in particular, Rwandan Vice President Paul Kagame, has been overlooked in discussions of Congolese complicity. Brody said that the chances of forming an international tribunal, whether the Arusha court or a new entity, to prosecute the killings were slim unless the United States takes a leading role in pushing for further action.

The Clinton administration originally had been charged with tilting toward Kabila, with the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, Bill Richardson, intervening with Annan to make concessions to the new leader. However, as Kabila's authoritarian rule has sparked international disapproval, the United States has distanced itself from him.

Swiss Banks Face Embargo

Devon Spurgeon in New York

NEW YORK State and New York City announced last week that they will impose sanctions against Swiss banks that held plundered Jewish assets during World War II unless the banks agree to settle claims made by Holocaust victims within 60 days.

"It is a moral issue," said New York City Comptroller Alan G. Hevesi, who outlined a four-phase program of sanctions that would begin on September 1 if the Swiss do not change their position. "They have created a climate among their own people that they have done wonders to establish restitution. That myth is false."

Credit Suisse and Union Bank of Switzerland, the principal defendants in a class-action lawsuit now pending in federal court in Brooklyn, offered $600 million last month to settle claims by survivors. The offer was rejected by Jewish leaders, who are seeking $1.5 billion from the banks, the Swiss central bank and the Swiss government.

The State Department said that it adamantly opposes the state sanctions. Calling them in a statement "wrong in principle and counterproductive," Stuart E. Eizenstat, an undersecretary in charge of the matter, said through an aide that he tried to stop New York state officials from imposing the sanctions on the grounds that they will block further negotiations.

Calling the recent breakdown of discussions between the Swiss government and Holocaust survivors "disturbing," Republican New Jersey Gov. Christine Todd Whitman, following New York's lead, ordered the state not to increase its investments in Swiss banks until the dispute is settled. California also announced that it has ceased doing state business with Swiss banks over the issue.

American Jewish organizations applauded the states' moves. Jewish leaders argued that further delay by the Swiss banks is an intentional tactic designed to save them hundreds of millions of dollars. With the average age of a Holocaust survivor being 82, Jewish leaders said that protracted litigation dims the chances that a survivor will live long enough to receive restitution.

If applied, the New York sanctions imposed on September 1 would bar overnight investments with Swiss banks and prohibit the banks from selling state and city debt and will prevent them from insuring debt. If the impasse continues beyond the first of next year, the sanctions could be extended to all Swiss companies.

Earlier last week, Melvyn Weiss, one of the attorneys for the class-action suit in Brooklyn, filed another lawsuit in Washington against the Swiss National Bank, alleging that the government bank accounted for up to 60 percent of all banking during the war.



Banking on a Blunt Instrument

COMMENT
David Broder

SENATOR Richard Lugar of Indiana, a man not given to rhetorical overstatement, calls them an "epidemic." The Republicans' most respected foreign policy spokesman is talking about the raft of economic sanctions imposed by the United States in recent years — a feel-good reflex with decidedly mixed real-world results.

In the 80 years since World War I ended, our government has felt called upon to ban aid, trade or other commerce with sanctioned nations 115 times. Remarkably, 61 of those actions have been taken during the last five years.

In 1997, the President's Export Council reported, U.S. sanctions were on the books against countries with more than half the world's population. The tool continues to grow in popularity. An update by a business coalition called USA-ENGAGE last month found that four more sanctions bills have become law in this Congress, and half a dozen more have been approved on one side of the Capitol or the other.

One of those measures, the Freedom From Religious Persecution Act that passed the House last month, could curb trade with as many as 75 countries, if the findings of the latest State Department report on human rights abuses are to be taken seriously. As the title of that measure suggests, sanctions are imposed, almost always, in pursuit of some highly valued principle, whether it be stopping terrorism, slowing the spread of nuclear weapons, halting the drug trade or defending civil liberties.

The problem is that unilateral sanctions rarely work; indeed, they often have the effects of hamstringing U.S. diplomacy and antagonizing allies. Too frequently, U.S. firms are shut out of markets others are happy to occupy. If there is an economic impact on the targeted country, too often it is felt by its oppressed population, not the smug, well-insulated rulers.

The sanctions are commonly imposed by statute, with varying degrees of discretion for the president to apply them. Lugar says they have become foreign policy-making on the cheap. "At first," he told me, "there was a feeling on Capitol Hill the administration was not very focused on foreign policy, so everyone felt free to play . . . We have a good number of members who do not want to use the military anywhere. Sanctions are a way of having your cake and eating it too. You make a statement, and it appears to be cost-free."

But now the administration, Lugar and Indiana Democratic Rep. Lee Hamilton are leading a bipartisan effort to cure Congress and the country of sanctions addiction. President Clinton is lobbying for more leeway for himself, even threatening to veto new sanctions bills. Lugar, Hamilton and a sizable group of allies from both parties — backed by industry and farm groups frustrated by loss of markets — are pressing legislation that would make sanctions less of a reflex response and more of a thought-through policy option.

Sanctions have their uses — when applied correctly. Stuart Eizenstat, the undersecretary of state who has exhausted himself trying to straighten out some of the problems, told me that "there are circumstances when sanctions are necessary and effective." But in recent testimony, he cited experience in countries ranging from Iran to Sudan, Burma, Nigeria and Cuba to show why sanctions "should not be a first resort" for American lawmakers.

Lugar said that, as the principal sponsor of the South Africa sanctions law which Nelson Mandela credits with helping bring down the apartheid regime in that country, he too knows they can be valuable, when carefully targeted.

Lugar and Hamilton would require that any sanctions legislation state explicitly the policy objectives being sought, analyze the economic effects here and abroad, include authority for a presidential waiver when the White House determines it to be in the national interest and terminate after two years unless extended.

The administration is supportive, but would like to have even more flexibility for the president. When India and Pakistan tested atomic warheads recently, they were automatically subjected to unilateral U.S. sanctions under a law sponsored by John Glenn, the Ohio Democrat who has led Senate efforts against nuclear proliferation. The trouble was that with no waiver authority for the president, the United States had no maneuvering room and, as is often the case, other major powers declined to go along.

Glenn told me he now wishes he had provided a 30-day cooling-off period, so the president could have sought multilateral support or used the threat of sanctions to obtain concessions from India and Pakistan.

Common sense suggests that sanctions deserve more careful consideration than they have received.



Firefighters start a backfire to prevent the flames reaching a school in Flagler County PHOTO: WINSTON LUZIER

Florida's Summer Goes Up in Smoke

Sue Anne Pressley in Daytona Beach

THE OCEAN was still here, of course, and the sun, peeking through a gray gauze of smoke. But things were far from normal last weekend on this 20-mile stretch of hard-packed sand billed as "the World's Most Famous Beach."

"It's pitiful out here," said Sam Nichols, who manages a beach-buggy rental company, looking out on sands sparsely populated with bathers and wearing a surgical mask because of the smoke. "This is like an off, off, off day, nothing like the Fourth of July."

A few miles to the west, north and south, the wildfires that have dominated life on Florida's upper east coast for more than two weeks ate away at the parched woodlands and pastures, blocking roadways and sometimes consuming homes. With such danger and heartache close by, it was hard for anyone here to enjoy what is normally one of the wildest holidays of the year. Most tourists just stayed away.

Those who did venture out found themselves smeared with ashes as well as suntan oil. A black line of soot marked the sand where the high tide had come in. Burned leaves floated in swimming pools. One man swore the sea water tasted like charcoal.

It may not have been a festive Fourth here in the fire zone, but it was certainly a memorable one.

Houligan's Irish Sports Pub, normally filled with the carefree, was turned into a rest area for exhausted firefighters, who flopped onto the floor, dead to the world until they had to do battle again.

"We are winning every battle and we will win this war," said Jim Tauber, director of fire services for Volusia County, the home of Daytona Beach. "Have faith."

Since June 1, at least 200 homes and businesses have been destroyed by the fires, propelled by the driest May and June in the state's history, and nearly half a million acres have been torched. In contrast, wildfires consumed 146,000 acres in the state in all of 1997.

But the fighting forces are growing daily. Fifteen hundred National Guard personnel have been called up to assist the 4,500 firefighters from 42 states and seven federal agencies. Two-thirds of the water-bearing helicopters in the southeastern U.S. are at work here. Every bulldozer in the state, it seems, has been put to service.

Already, the wildfires have cost more than $100 million to fight, and that is only the beginning. Officials in this tourism-dependent state have not yet calculated how many people canceled vacation plans — July usually sees 4 million visitors in Florida — but it was obvious the fires also meant devastating losses in revenue.

Government Tells States to Pay for Viagra

Amy Goldstein

THE federal government this month ordered states to cover Viagra under their Medicaid programs, infuriating many of the nation's governors, who swiftly accused U.S. health officials of costing them millions of dollars and ignoring their worries about the male impotence drug.

The unexpected directive, dispatched in a letter from the Department of Health and Human Services, told states that federal law requires them to pay for the expensive, enormously popular drug through Medicaid, the insurance program for the poor and disabled. Any state Medicaid program that covers prescription medicines, the letter said, must also pay for Viagra.

But states countered that, in issuing its order, the federal government was putting them in the untenable position of covering Viagra for men while virtually none of them cover birth control or infertility treatments for women. And they said federal officials had rushed to condone Viagra just as warnings are beginning to surface that the drug's huge popularity may be causing deaths among some men.

"What we know about some of the real danger signs of Viagra really raise serious concerns," said Elaine Ryan, government affairs director for the American Public Welfare Association.

Based on the association's survey of several states, Ryan predicted that Viagra will add $100 million to $200 million nationwide to states' Medicaid expenses.

Banning Middlesex

EDITORIAL

VIBES are not good these days between lawmakers and public librarians, whose organizations have expressed hot opposition to several pieces of pending legislation concerning the Internet and new technologies. Primary among these is the push to require libraries, along with public schools, to install blocking or "filtering" software, not just on some machines or children's machines, but on all machines installed with the help of public money to which a minor might have access.

Filtering software, which is designed to block an Internet user from being able to access Web sites with a specific profile or keyword, has attracted enthusiasm from the first as a middle ground between centralized censorship of Internet material (found unconstitutional in the overturning of the Communications Decency Act, and widely considered impractical) and total helplessness by parents who want their kids to surf safely in a freewheeling, sometimes rough medium.

But when localities or states take the next step and begin "requiring" the mass use of such products, the flaws become glaring. Many of the products so far prove to be crude or overbroad. A filter that Loudoun County, Virginia, libraries tried to require on every library terminal — until a court overturned the requirement — blocked all information about "Middlesex County." A competing product blocked every site that didn't meet its sponsors' criteria for "tolerance," which screened out much right-of-center material. The abuses that would result from attempts to choose such software for a whole school or county to offer the public can hardly be overestimated.

Despite this, a House subcommittee recently approved a proposal by Rep. Ernest J. Istook Jr., R-Oklahoma, that would amend the Health and Human Services Department budget to prohibit the expenditure of any funds for computers that would offer unfiltered Internet access. The Senate Commerce Committee in March approved a provision that would impose similar restrictions as a condition for receiving the discounted "e-rate" (itself the subject of attack). These proposals would take a potentially useful, still primitive tool for giving parents control and grossly misuse it to impose broad restrictions on public access to information and on the people who provide it.

Senegalese Women Break With Tradition

For many the practise of female circumcision is no longer acceptable. **Vivienne Walt** reports from Diabougou

AISSA TOU SARR thought she would never see the dreaded moment. Then late last year, from a far-off village, came an old Muslim priest. He had walked for days in his rubber thongs and white robe to urge the community to stop Sarr from doing her life's work: cutting out the genitals of young girls.

"In the beginning, people were shocked, and shouted in anger," said Sarr. "This was our tradition! Some walked out of the meeting."

Sarr was about to get caught up in a small revolution that has gusted through rural Senegal like a hot dust storm. In the past year, village after village has declared an end to female circumcision, a practice that has existed in parts of Africa since the pharaohs.

Sarr, in her fifties, had been the ritual circumciser for the village for decades, using a razor blade to perform the procedure on about 300 girls every rainy season. She learned the trade from her grandmother, who had circumcised her at 15 and, in turn, had excised the genitals of her daughters, granddaughters and great-granddaughters.

Initially, Sarr feared she would not have the emotional resilience to quit the job. Not everyone, she said, has the stamina to do it. Not only is she proud of her skill, it has provided her with a decent living: about $60, lunch and a bar of soap for each operation. "I couldn't stop thinking, 'How am I going to take care of my family? What am I going to do?'" she said.

After weeks of bitter argument, the villagers gathered in February and vowed never again to circumcise their girls. Kept alive through wars, migration and slavery, a centuries-old tradition was abolished within minutes. And Sarr, who now depends on her brothers' charity, resigned herself to near-destitution.

Sarr's hardship is just one of the consequences of this quiet rebellion. Since last July, 29 Senegalese communities have declared an end to female circumcision, and begun pressing others to join them. In the process, their leaders have become local legends — even Hillary Rodham Clinton hailed them during her visit here in April.

About 130 million African women in about 28 countries are circumcised, and thousands die each year as a result, in childbirth, or from infections and hemorrhaging, according to the World Health Organization. Yet until now, Western exhortations have had little effect in Africa. In fact, they have often been met with defensive hostility by millions who believe the tradition is required not only by Islam, but for hygiene and sexual prudence, too.

Traveling around Senegal, one still hears the traditionalists recite convictions identical to those heard across Africa: that the clitoris smells bad, that it's unclean and grows too large for women to walk comfortably, and that uncircumcised girls are likely to get pregnant before marriage.

Ending female circumcision wasn't on the agenda 10 years ago, when Molly Melching, an American, founded an organization called Tostan (Breakthrough). Melching, who came to Senegal in 1975 as an exchange student and never left, designed an intensive literacy and skills training program for women, built around group discussions. Funded largely by UNICEF, she hired villagers to teach the classes and published workbooks in local languages.

Melching said she's learned from some critical mistakes made by international organizations and Western feminists. Too often, Melching said, Western organizations hope to persuade individuals to abandon female circumcision without understanding that such independence could leave an African woman with no marriage prospects and expose her family to scorn or ostracism. Demba Diawara, the imam, or priest, who arrived in Diabougou to plead the case against circumcision, said: "Even if you learn something is bad, if it's your tradition, you can't just get up and stop it."

And even within villages that have vowed to stop circumcision, it has been a struggle. In Malicounda, a village of 3,000 located 55 miles southeast of the capital, Dakar, women argued bitterly with men, who feared that their public renunciation of circumcision would deeply embarrass them.

Grass-roots opposition has provided protection for politicians. One month after Malicounda's decision was reported in Senegal, President Abdou Diouf made his first-ever declaration against circumcision and is now pushing to make it a crime, punishable by six years in jail.

However, the tradition has defenders everywhere. When Melching broached the subject with a group of women near Malicounda, she immediately got an earful of complaints.

"It was only when white people came and said you shouldn't do this anymore, that those women said they didn't believe in circumcision," said Mame Fatou Diatta, 33, her eyes blazing. "I saw Mrs. Clinton come and denigrate our culture!" she shouted, referring to the first lady's embrace of the Malicounda women at a televised celebration in Dakar.

And near Ker Simbara, Diawara's village about 60 miles from Dakar, a group of elderly men sat under a big tree, arguing with him. "Circumcision is normal, according to Mohammed," said the local imam, cross-legged on a mat, with a heavy Koran open on his lap.

If the idea is to take hold throughout Senegal, let alone the rest of Africa, it will need hundreds more villages to join the fight. But word has already carried clear across this country. Recently, hundreds of miles south of here, 15 more villages gathered in celebration, to declare they would never again practice female circumcision.

Family Matters

Marguerite Kelly

THE WAR AGAINST PARENTS
What We Can Do for America's Beleaguered Moms and Dads
By Sylvia Ann Hewlett and Cornel West
Houghton Mifflin. 320pp. $24

IN A perfect world, all children would be safe, healthy and well-schooled, with two parents they could count on anytime, anywhere.

Some on the right think we can get there — or at least get a little closer — if we just pull away the props and tell parents to shape up, while those on the left think that they will become model parents and solid taxpaying citizens if we just cushion them enough. These two well-respected authors — an economist and a professor of religion and Afro-American studies — lean to the left but they criticize both left and right with almost equal vigor.

They zap the right for undoing the pro-family policies and tax breaks of the '50s, and the left for promoting divorce and single parenthood in the '70s. They denounce the welfare system for shutting fathers out of the Aid to Families with Dependent Children and the Great Society for spawning bloated, self-perpetuating bureaucracies. They decry the greed of management for inflating their own salaries while firing as many workers as they can. They attack the quality of foster care and the abusive practices of the Child Protective Services that send so many children into foster care, and they rage against broken homes, stepparents, psychotherapy, music, television, movies and the high cost of housing, supporting it all with an array of artfully chosen facts.

Hewlett and West hit a lot of appropriate targets, but their own proposed solutions have more misses than hits. Although they shuffle taxes and rework regulations to help families, and occasionally suggest smart ways to pay for their ideas — such as a cap on mortgage interest tax deductions for households with incomes above $100,000 — their Parents' Bill of Rights is a mix of the good, the bad and the silly: the kind of ideas you might hear in a graduate school coffee shop.

While paid parental leave and a bigger income tax deduction for each child could help families greatly, many of their proposals are simply sappy, like a parents' lounge in every school; $2-5,000 to parents each time they have another child and a wildly expanded suffrage that would give parents an extra vote for each child under 18.

The authors' basic premise is, however, correct. As the richest nation in the world, we clearly must do something to help our beleaguered parents deal with the terrible time and money crunch they face today. In the '50s a man could raise a family on his income while his wife stayed at home, but few can do that any more.

"The world is pitted against parents," the authors say. But some things have improved. Hewlett and West ignore studies which show that, in terms of hours worked, we pay much more for health insurance, social security and college tuitions than we did 40 years ago. But we work much less to pay for our houses, our food, our clothes and just about everything else.

The authors are guilty of other serious omissions. They blame the government and business for stressing the family but they barely mention the havoc drugs have wrought, nor do they talk about the social changes that sent so many mothers to work in the '70s.

The migration was inevitable, and it had little to do with money. For the first time in the history of the world, mothers didn't have enough to do at home. Though the children needed their attention as much as ever, the house did not. The industry canned their vegetables and baked their bread; appliances washed and dried their clothes and dishes.

Women felt so trivialized that they had to prove their worth somehow and so they went to work in droves, despite unequal wages and almost non-existent child care. As wages and day care improved, however, their expectations went up, too. Today's parents want much more than their own parents did and they want it sooner — another major change ignored by Hewlett and West.

In the last 20 years the one-car family has become the two-car family; the Dodge Dart has been replaced by the Ford Explorer and the 5-room starter house now has seven rooms. Whoever thought we would buy diapers over and over again, dispose of our razors every week and serve take-out and frozen dinners more often than we cooked? The luxuries of the '70s have become the necessities of the '90s but it takes two people to pay for them.

Finally they didn't notice the greatest change of all. A rapidly growing number of parents are quitting the workforce for a while, or they're sharing their jobs. Parents still want everything, but they want their families most.

When the authors look at the big picture of the '90s, they think the world is more askew than it should be — and they're right — but our values and our aspirations are not as distorted as they think.

ILLUSTRATION: JILL KARLA SCHWARZ

Ventriloquist's Dummy

John Crowley

THE EVERLASTING STORY OF NORY
By Nicholson Baker
Random House. 226pp. $22

MANY novelists have among their works a tour de force — a startling or unlikely achievement or a brilliant triumph against self-imposed odds or an immodest display of skill for its own sake. Nicholson Baker is a writer of tours de force who has yet to write a novel. Perhaps that's too stringent or exclusive a judgment, considering the present baffling and baffled state of ambitious novel-writing, but certainly every definition of the tour de force fits Vox (book-length phone sex) or Mezzanine (endless office trivialities) or The Fermata (goofy porno fantasy) and his others, not because of their subjects or modes but because of the exhilarating success they achieve.

His new book is one more. The Everlasting Story Of Nory is a few months in the life of Eleanor, or Nory, who would be in the fourth grade if she were in America but who is spending a year with her parents and baby brother in England and going to a blazer-and-reptile cathedral school. The book is written in the third person, but the language and the ethos are pervasively those of a smart (but not prodigious), strong (but not fearless), and imaginative (but not poetic) girl of 10, who has many interests and is apprehensive about bad dreams:

"Nory especially disliked when she had teeth dreams. Say, for example, a beautiful graceful fluffer-necked duck that was just sitting away the time in the reeds by a river, its feathers being fluttered by the wind, and when you came up to it in the dream to hold out your hand to say hello and give it a piece of bread it would suddenly curl back its beaks and show huge rangy teeth."

Nory's language is a mass of wonderful malapropisms, often ones that suggest mistaken but not so unlikely shadow meanings that the phrases will probably retain throughout Nory's everlasting life: a crude awakening, kitten caboodle, bump on a rug, par none, totally made up from scrap. But it's not just the language that Baker reproduces — or recreates — but the coarse weave of childhood thought, the leaps of memory, apprehension and association. Only lengthy quotation would do it justice.

Baker does have competition in this sort of ventriloquism, though I would rank his attempt with the best I know of; for instance Eloise, certain of the Ramona books by Beverly Cleary, and The Young Visiters by Daisy Ashford, who, however, actually was a 9-year-old girl. Like that book, and unlike Cleary's and Eloise, Baker's book, though it can be read easily and with pleasure by children, is for grown-ups. Ten-year-olds may find nothing particularly brilliant in its capturing of minute nuances of their own vagaries of speech and thought; many would probably rate their own literary work as highly as Nory's, and many would be right, which is of course the point; and they might object (my own daughters did) at how much is said and how little is done.

Partly for amusement, because she has no close friend in England, partly to lessen the likelihood of bad dreams at night or to stop thinking about them, Nory thinks of stories; she is constantly at work on several, some written (her spelling is wonderfully captured, as idiosyncratic yet universal as her thought processes) and some told to her dolls or to her brother. There is the life story of Cooch her raccoon doll, the story of the Icy Freezie Day in Autumn, and the amazing Everlasting Life of Mariana.

Nory has firm ideas about what makes for a good story: You really need something to fail in a story, she thinks, because when it fails it has to get better. How does Baker meet this criterion? His story is mostly less like a Nory story and more like life: more school, more sleeping and getting up, more aimless thought, and fewer gratifying discoveries, coincidences and reversals.

Nory considers that the thing that has failed in her own life is that she has no best friend in England, and prospects there are rather poor; she cultivates competitive Kira but also befriends (without particularly liking) the despised and bullied Pamela, and Kira finds this shocking — Nory will ruin her own standing that way. Pamela refuses to complain to her teachers about the bullies, and forbids Nory to as well; she is also pretty unforthcoming and not very pleased with Nory as a friend. Oh well. In the end the Kira/Pamela difficulty works out, maybe a little better, or a little quicker, than it ought to, which is to say more like a story than like life, which the book up to then has not been.

The language is wonderful, Nory is a wonder too, but it is the secret life led in Nory's stories that is the heart of this book. They are about love and loss and discovery and suffering, about living through the burning rain and recognizing the princess with the yellow hair and about creating your own endings and your own continuings. It would be unsurprising — though sort of really badly unfair — if Baker has actually transcribed the writings of an actual child (his own daughter?) and put them out under his (and Nory's) name. Because of course now there would be no way to give them back.

In the Name of the Father

Jonathan Yardley

DON'T TELL DAD
A Memoir
By Peter Fonda
Hyperion. 498pp. $25.95

PETER FONDA wastes no time in telling us that "I am cursed . . . with a detailed memory that unfolds itself constantly on the plate of my past," then devotes 500 pages to proving the point. Although Fonda's memory is not picture-perfect, heaven knows it is copious, and heaven knows it has enabled him to go on and on and on in what may not actually be the longest Hollywood memoir ever but too often feels that way.

Everything is here. Fonda cannot bear to let go of anything. He always tells all. If he lights a joint, we take every puff with him; if he flees into the arms of women not his wife, we lie there with him; if he finds employment in yet another forgettable movie, we hear every call for "Cut!"; if he rages against any slight, real or imagined, by his distinguished and distant father, we feel every peak and valley of his emotions.

This does produce a certain voyeuristic fascination, but it makes for an odd book. What is most interesting about Fonda is his struggle to assure himself of his father's love and respect, a struggle he recounts in fits and starts but will not bring himself to confront head-on.

Fonda has spent much of his life behaving like an overgrown infant: making scenes, spouting anti-authoritarian protests, indulging his expensive appetites and desires while insisting that he is merely a man of the people and a friend of the environment. It has not been a pretty spectacle. But, typical of such behavior, its roots are to be found in insecurity, rejection, pain and loss.

A bright and deeply sensitive boy, Fonda was granted little chance to grow up normally. Not merely was his father famous and aloof, but his mother committed suicide before he was 10. As soon as he developed a deep attachment to her successor, that marriage ended. He bounced around from household to household, from boarding school to boarding school: a Dickensian childhood, in the lap of luxury.

He wanted what every child wants: the love of his parents. The son rolled with every punch, praying that acceptance and reconciliation might at last arrive. When, in fashion, they did, "years of frustration fell off my heart like melting snow sliding off a roof."

Fonda writes with contempt about the "psychobabble" to which some journalists who have covered his family are prone, but his own testimony will do little to discourage them, because he engages in a fair amount of same himself.

Not to belittle Fonda's pain in any way, but this is a familiar case of the bright, sensitive child who feels rejected and unwanted, who grows into an adult for whom acceptance and praise and love are life's most compelling needs. For as long as there has been a theater there have been people drawn to it for exactly this reason.

It is not really clear whether Fonda believes he has managed to come to peace with himself. His second marriage has been happy, if not without tension, and he loves his children. But though there have been occasional bright moments in his acting career, he has never really risen above playing Peter Fonda, or his idea of Peter Fonda. The brutal truth is that however he may measure up against his father as a human being, their careers as actors simply do not bear comparison.

Dan Jellinek on the universities' battle to adopt to — and ultimately profit from — the rise of online technology

Digital degrees

DO THE world's universities have a future as the Internet begins to deliver the opportunities of remote, decentralised learning? This was the question addressed by United States exponents of online education at a conference in Virginia last month entitled "Building the virtual university". They did so as many US higher education bodies — and some in the UK — began experimenting with online courses in standard national qualifications (see panel).

According to Lev Gonick, dean of the instructional technology and academic computing department of California State Polytechnic University, debate is raging between the proponents of remote digital learning and those who say it will undermine good teaching practices and the college experience.

"Both the doomsday prophets and many of the supposed technology visionaries see the end of the university as either inevitable or likely," says Gonick.

However, both arguments miss two essential points, he says. The first is that institutions have adapted to huge social changes in the past. The second is that the expansion of remote digital learning is a continuation of a long-term trend for higher education to move away from the old élitist model, increasing access to education for millions worldwide. And far from jeopardising the future of higher education institutions, as student numbers continue to rise, online courses could be the only feasible way of coping.

Gonick detects a simple fear of change behind much of the opposition to online learning: "What we in academia fear most are the loss of ritual and the challenges associated with the creation of new practices. We are afraid of losing our identity, our sense of control and authority, our comfort, and quality of life."

To think this way is to miss the positive qualities which multimedia brings to education, he says.

It extends learning opportunities: adults can continue to take up new learning opportunities over the Web after they leave university, and the disabled, people in rural communities and people looking after young children can all benefit from its flexibility and ease of access.

Steve Eskow, head of the US Electronic University Network, says that far from being a dehumanising force, the simplicity, directness and power of digital communication mean "our encounters are more human and engaging than many of our classroom experiences, where we have little opportunity to encounter each other". This is not to say that the transition to widespread online learning is to be an easy one.

Tim Luke of the department of political science at Virginia Tech says the efficiency and flexibility of online learning means that it is here to stay, but warns that online teaching takes at least as much time and effort as a face-to-face class. "We are essentially constructing an entirely new "built" environment online . . . it all will take a lot of energy and money." Constructing the online classroom is the easy bit: obtaining admissions, financial aid, student support, administration, accreditation and other backroom elements is a tougher prospect, says Luke.

"Most of the enthusiasts from private enterprise or consultancies who say this mode of education will be an easy, inevitable and universally accepted change do not teach online," he says. "The change will come, but it will be slow and tough."

Bachelor life . . . will the Internet spell the end for university life as generations of students have known it? PHOTOGRAPH: ANDREW PARSONS

Seminars in cyberspace

Virginia Tech
Virginia Tech has been building a virtual university since 1993 (www.vt.edu), with a cyberschool (www.cyber.vt.edu) and a virtual campus (www.vto.vt.edu).
Assistant Professor of Philosophy Gary Hardcastle says his course's Web site is now as essential a learning site as the physical classroom.

Oak Ridge National Laboratory
David Tarnoff, manufacturing engineer at East Tennessee State University, has been developing remote physical access to electron microscopes at the US government's Oak Ridge National Laboratory (www.ornl.gov/). Users post samples to the lab, and can then operate the microscopes remotely from a keyboard.

Open University
The Open University, the UK's chief exponent of distance learning, now offers 14 Internet-based courses. All communication with tutor and fellow students is conducted by e-mail and electronic conferencing (www.open.ac.uk/OU/Studying/Internet.html).

Tidewater Community College
Donna Reiss runs an online liberal arts course at Tidewater Community College, Virginia, in which students exchange e-mails with poets and view art on the Web. She says one advantage is busy people can schedule their work at any time. www.tc.cc.va.us/faculty/tcreisd/techarts/











COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

Afghanaid

Based Peshawar, Pakistan

Afghanaid, a British NGO with head office in Peshawar and field offices in Afghanistan, seeks an experienced international professional to lead the agency's expanding community development programmes.

Afghanaid's community development programmes provide the central focus for the agency's work in Afghanistan which aims to enable communities to achieve livelihood security and increase incomes. Our goal is to organise communities to obtain equitable access to the skills, methods and inputs needed to use sustainably their own resources. It involves institution building through village organisations, and interventions in key sectors in agriculture, animal husbandry, common property resource management, micro-finance, income generation and health education.

Candidates should have a good degree (preferably at Masters level) in a relevant discipline, ideally community development, agriculture or economics. A solid understanding of community development and social mobilisation, backed by at least 10 years developing world experience including a substantial period in the management, design and "hands-on" implementation of community development projects, is essential. Previous experience of working in Islamic countries and in areas of conflict would be an advantage.

As a member of the Afghanaid Directorate, the Community Development Director will need to be a team player and have excellent interpersonal skills.

Closing date for applications (in the UK) - August 14th 1998.

For further information about the position of Community Development Director and the work of Afghanaid contact Oxford Human Resource Consultants Ltd on fax 44 1865 201717 or email mwills@oxfordhr.co.uk

For an informal discussion call Michael Wills at Oxford HR Consultants Ltd, The Oxford Centre for Innovation, Mill Street, Oxford OX2 0JX, UK. Telephone 44 1865 201515

IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR COMMON GROUND
OUR MA IN CONFLICT MANAGEMENT
PUTS YOU RIGHT ON TOP OF IT.

MA IN CONFLICT ANALYSIS AND MANAGEMENT

ROYAL ROAD'S newest graduate degree program provides the necessary skills to identify, analyze and manage group conflict in a variety of international and domestic arenas. This two year distance learning interdisciplinary program includes two five week residency periods at Royal Roads University

For program information,
call (250) 391-2505
Fax (250) 391-2522
E-mail: rruregistrar@royalroads.ca
You can write to:
The Registrar, Royal Roads University,
2005 Sooke Road, Victoria, B.C.
V9B 5Y2 CANADA



PROGRAMME DIRECTOR

South Africa (Pretoria based) — £22,831

Save the Children Fund (UK) has been active in South Africa since 1986 working with local NGO's in health, social welfare, disability and early childhood education. In 1996, SCF (UK) opened an office in Johannesburg to provide better support to ongoing projects and to explore possible new roles.

As Programme Director, your task will be to oversee the implementation of SCF's country strategy paper and to develop a programme to suit South Africa's unusual circumstances. To meet the challenge of this exciting new post you will need substantial experience in managing overseas development programmes, demonstrating skills in financial, resource and staff management/development. Excellent negotiation and representational skills, sound information management skills and an understanding of the South Africa context are also important prerequisites.

The above post is offered on a 25-month contract and has accompanied status. Salary should be tax free. You can also expect a good benefits package, including generous leave, accommodation and flights.

For further details and an application form write to: Jenny Thomas, Overseas Personnel Administrator, Africa, SCF, 17 Grove Lane, London SE5 8RD or fax 0171 793 7610.

Closing date: 14th August 1998.

SCF aims to be an equal opportunities employer.

Save the Children

■ Working for a better world for children

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON
EXTERNAL PROGRAMME

email:enquiries@elsa.lon.ac.uk.
Http://www.lon.ac.uk/external

For a prospectus contact: (98-WG-07), Room 1, Senate House, Malet Street, London WC1E 7HU.
Tel: +44 171 862 8361/8360.
Fax: +44 171 636 5841.

STUDY AT A DISTANCE:

YOUR FLEXIBLE ROUTE TO A UNIVERSITY OF LONDON DEGREE

In addition to the range of over 40 programmes, NEW undergraduate degrees are offered in: **Banking & Finance**
Economics (Politics & International Relations)
Economics (Geography); Economics (Sociology)

at masters level: **Dental Public Health**
Epidemiology: Principles & Practice
International Management (MBA)

AMERICAN MILITARY UNIVERSITY

MA & BA Programs By Distance Education

Graduate Program
150 Courses 7 Majors
Defense Management
Intelligence
Warfare History
Civil War Studies

Undergraduate Program
100 Courses 3 Majors
Military Management
Intelligence Studies
Military History

For More Info Call
(+1)703-330-5398 Ext 111

Home Page at
www.amunet.edu

St George's Hospital Medical School
University of London

TENURE TRACK SENIOR RESEARCH SCIENTIST IN PSYCHOLOGICAL, SOCIAL OR BEHAVIOURAL SCIENCE

(3 years initially, leading to a permanent post)

An opportunity to lead and promote an expanding research group in the Department of General Psychiatry

Applications are invited for a productive Research Scientist in Psychological, Social or Behavioural Sciences in the Department of General Psychiatry.

The successful candidate will have an established research record in an area relevant to the research profile of the Department and experience in the application of rigorous research methodology. Preference will be given to candidates with the ability to take a lead in fostering research activity within the department and in forging links with other groups and individuals carrying out compatible research in the School. Applicants should have proven experience of attracting and obtaining research funds.

The post would be suitable for a postdoctoral researcher in psychological, behavioural or social sciences, (or related disciplines), with an interest in and experience of managing projects and applications for funds.

Salary will be up to a maximum of £30,679 pa inclusive on the full-time University Research 1A/II scale, according to experience and qualifications.

The appointment will be for an initial period of three years. During the course of the contract, a decision will be made as to whether a permanent contract should be offered on the basis of the quality and promise of the postholder and his/her work. Flexible working hours or part-time appointment is an option which could be explored with the successful candidate, if appropriate.

Further details and an application form from the Personnel Officer, St. George's Hospital Medical School, Cranmer Terrace, London SW17 0RE, 0181 725 5020 (24-hour answerphone) or e-mail: d.tuck@sghms.ac.uk. Closing date 14 July 1998. Please quote reference no. GW93/98.

The School is an Equal Opportunities Employer

University of Saskatchewan/CANADA

CERTESL

The Certificate in Teaching English as a Second Language

This home study programme offers courses in the theory and practice of teaching English as a second language.

- flexible home study
- affordable tuition - approx. £1260 for program
- 6 courses to complete certificate
- includes teaching practicum
- study anywhere in the world
- '97 Canadian educational award winner

For more information:
CERTESL Program, University of Saskatchewan
- Phone: 1-306-966-5563 * Fax: 1-306-966-5590
- e-mail: extcred@usask.ca
- www.extension.usask.ca/Go/CERTESL

Flexible Learning at Napier University

Napier University is one of the largest higher education institutions in Scotland. We offer a range of high quality flexible learning opportunities overseas, to countries which include Mauritius, Hong Kong and South Africa. Programmes we deliver include qualifications in economics, management, business administration, financial services, careers guidance, property and construction management, computer studies and biomedical and life sciences.

For a prospectus contact: Sarah Murray, Educational Development Unit, Napier University, Craighouse Road, Edinburgh EH10 5LG, Scotland. Tel: 0131 455 6122. Fax: 0131 455 6191. Email: s.murray@napier.ac.uk or web-site: http://www.edu.napier.ac.uk/flexlern/flexible/home.htm

NAPIER UNIVERSITY
EDINBURGH

Access to English and Caribbean Studies by Distance Learning

London Open College Network Accrediation
Matriculation equivalent

Contact: Cindy Barlow,
Professional and Community Education (PACE)
Goldsmiths College, New Cross, London SE14 6NW

Goldsmiths UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

Telephone (+44) 171 919 7242
Fax (+44) 171 919 7223
e-mail o.barlow@gold.ac.uk

Specialising in the study of creative, cultural and social processes and commited to life-long learning.

Study with the College that comes to you

Over 150 distance learning courses

• GCSEs and A Levels • University of London Degrees • Institute of Linguists qualifications • Engineering Council exams (Part 1 and Part 2). Expert tuition. Start any time. Full ODLQC accreditation.

For FREE guide to courses call
NATIONAL EXTENSION COLLEGE
+44 1223 450200
DEPT MC014, NEC,18 BROOKLANDS AVENUE, CAMBRIDGE, CB2 2HN. E-mail:nec@dial.pipex.com

---

14th Intake to the Management Masters Programme

The 3A rated Lincoln School of Management is currently accepting applications for the following MBA courses offered as full-time (52 weeks commencing 1st October 1998) or part-time (block taught in 11 weekends followed by a dissertation over a period of 2 years):

MBA (General Management) — *MBA International Water Management*
MBA Finance — *MBA International Tourism*
MBA Strategic Marketing — *MBA Information Management*

"Preparing Managers for the Challenges and Opportunities of the 21st Century"

For an application form and an information pack please contact:

Academic Programme Manager
Management Masters Programme
University of Lincolnshire & Humberside
Lincoln University campus
Brayford Pool, Lincoln LN6 7TS

Telephone 01522 886117. Facsimile 01522 886032.
Email deneville@lincoln.ac.uk

University of Lincolnshire & Humberside



Save the Children is the UK's largest international voluntary agency, working for the rights and welfare of children in the UK as well as over 50 of the world's least developed countries. In all our work, we aim to make a reality of children's rights.

SOCIAL WELFARE PROGRAMME MANAGER

Liberia — £20,778 p.a.

SCF started working in Liberia and surrounding countries in 1991, focusing on the needs of children affected by civil war. Since the peace accord we have been implementing long-term development initiatives in partnership with government and local NGOs. A wide range of programmes including health and sanitation, food security and social welfare.

The Social Welfare Programme consists of family tracing, the de-institutionalisation of children and the rehabilitation of ex-fighter children. As Social Welfare Programme Manager you will help to promote children's rights through advocacy and good practice, supporting the Programme Director and managing our social welfare programme by providing technical and planning support. In addition to supervising the social welfare arm, you'll help develop a strategic plan for our Liberia programme, seek funding and develop useful local partnerships.

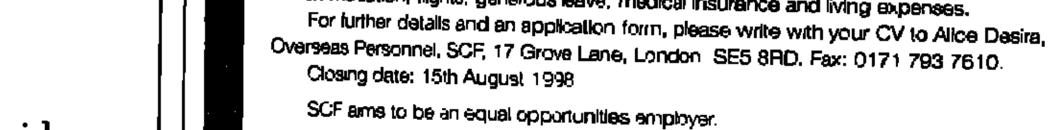
A social welfare/child protection or relevant development management background is essential, as are excellent personnel management and staff development skills. You will also need financial management and fundraising experience, familiarity with distance management and experience of working in insecure/emergency situations overseas. Analytical, strategic thinking and teamworking skills are vital; ideally, you will also offer fluent French and knowledge of West Africa.

This post has unaccompanied status and is offered on a 12 month contract. The salary should be tax free. You can also expect a generous benefits package that includes accommodation, flights, generous leave, medical insurance and living expenses.

For further details and an application form, please write with your CV to Alice Desira, Overseas Personnel, SCF, 17 Grove Lane, London SE5 8RD. Fax: 0171 793 7610.

Closing date: 15th August 1998

SCF aims to be an equal opportunities employer.



■ Working for a better world for children

Lectureship in War Studies

School of Humanities

KING'S College LONDON *Founded* 1829 University of London

Applications are invited for the above Lectureship in War Studies. The Department of War Studies is one of the leading Departments in the field of Politics and International relations in the UK and was awarded in 5* in the 1996 RAE.

The successful candidate will have research and teaching expertise in the security issues and policies of Russia and the countries of the former Soviet Union, together with a willingness to contribute to other areas of the Department's teaching. The ability to make a significant contribution to the Department's research profile is essential and a capacity to provide or to develop an expertise in the history of Soviet/Russian armed forces and civil-military relations would be an advantage.

This position is available for two years and appointment will be made on either the Lecturer A or B scale, currently £18,500 to £23,570 or £24,466 to £30,679 per annum (inclusive of £2,134 pa London Allowance) depending upon experience and qualifications.

For further details and an application form please send a self addressed envelope, marked with the reference number below, to Louisa de Beaufort, School of Humanities, King's College London, Strand, London WC2R 2LS. The closing date for receipt of applications is 17 July 1998. Please quote reference A1/QC/19/98, email war.admissions@kcl.ac.uk

Equality of opportunity is College policy

TEFL DIPLOMA

Study TEFL, ESL or TESOL by Distance Learning. Also: Cert.TEFL, Dip. ESP(Business), Cert. TEFL (Management)
Prospectus from:

International Learning Centres

12 Rutland Square, Edinburgh, EH1 2BB
Tel/Fax 01259 720440
100665.506@compuserve.com
www.Quilinet.com

MARKETING MANAGER

for Turkish Food Import Company

We are a rapidly expanding import company specialising in foodstuffs and related hardware, mainly from Turkey. We require a young graduate to undertake all aspects of marketing the company to major outlets both wholesale and retail. Must have a thorough knowledge of the non-perishable foods industry and good working knowledge of import/export trade. Must be able to communicate at all levels, both with customers and suppliers. Must speak fluent Turkish and English. Willing to travel both in UK and abroad.

Salary £17,000 p.a. plus performance related bonus.

Write, with full CV to Sema Food Ltd, 578580 Green Lane, London, N8 0RP

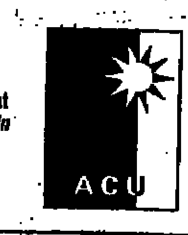
ASSOCIATION OF COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITIES

University	Post	Ref. No.
AFRICA AND THE CARIBBEAN		
UWI (Trinidad)	Director, Institute of International Relations	W46719
UWI (Trinidad)	Chair International Economic Relations	W46720
AUSTRALIA		
Melbourne	Chair Obstetrics & Gynaecology	W46725
HONG KONG		
Hong Kong	ASP Public Administration	W46722
Hong Kong	AP/ASP School of Business	W46723
Hong Kong	P:Chair of Medicine	W46724
NEW ZEALAND		
Auckland	AP/SL Painting	W46715
Auckland	SL/L Centre for Professional Development	W46721
Canterbury	L Classics	W46705
Canterbury	AP/SL/L Marketing	W46709
Canterbury	SL/L Finance	W46710
Canterbury	L Law	W46711
Canterbury	L Education	W46712
Canterbury	L Japanese	W46713
Canterbury	L Geological Sciences	W46714
Canterbury	SL/L American Studies	W46718
PACIFIC		
PNGUT (Papua New Guinea)	AP Computer Engineering	W46706
PNGUT (Papua New Guinea)	L Computer Engineering	W46707
PNGUT (Papua New Guinea)	PTO Power & Control (Electrical Engineering)	W46708

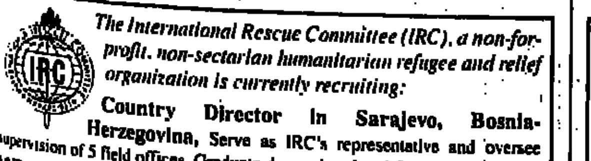
Abbreviations: P - Professor; AP - Associate Professor; ASP – Assistant Professor; SL - Senior Lecturer; L - Lecturer; PTO - Principal Technical Officer.

For further details of any of the above staff vacancies please contact ACU (Advertising), 36 Gordon Square, London WC1H 0PF, UK (internat. tel. +44 171 387 8572 ext. 206 [UK office hours]; fax +44 171 383 0368; e-mail: appts@acu.ac.uk), quoting reference number of post(s). Details will be sent by airmail/first class post. A sample copy of the publication *Appointments in Commonwealth Universities*, including subscription details, is available from the same source.

Promoting educational co-operation throughout the Commonwealth







The International Rescue Committee (IRC), a non-for-profit, non-sectarian humanitarian refugee and relief organization is currently recruiting:

Country Director in Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serve as IRC's representative and oversee supervision of 5 field offices. Graduate degree in related field; minimum five years experience in relief or development work; proven program, financial and personnel management skills; excellent communication and diplomacy skills. Position is for 24 months. Salary $40-50K. Contact: Andrew Roberts Fax: 001 212 551 3170, email: andrew@intrescom.org

International Rescue Committee, 122 East 42nd Street, 12th Floor, New York, NY10168 USA.

For further information, please visit IRC's website at:http://www.intrescom.org

---



The International Rescue Committee (IRC), a non-for-profit, non-sectarian humanitarian refugee and relief organization is currently recruiting:

Emergency Coordinator (Bissau, Guinea-Bissau)

Responsibilities: assess the operating conditions and security environment for a possible role for IRC to provide humanitarian assistance in Guinea-Bissau; represent IRC in an official capacity; prepare to initiate emergency assistance programs.

Requirements: MA in International Development or related field; at least 5 years overseas experience, preferably in managerial positions; one year in emergency areas; knowledge of Portuguese required; knowledge of French preferred. Contact: Mary Louise Eagleton, Fax: 001-212-551-3170 email: mary@intrescom.org

International Rescue Committee, 122 East 42nd Street, 12th Floor, New York, NY10168 USA.
For further information, please visit IRC's website at: http://www.intrescom.org

---

Volunteers need to work in Africa!

Work with street children, tree planting and prevention of HIV/AIDS and at HUMANA People to People projects in Zambia.

Qualifications needed:
6 months training in Denmark (boarding expenses) hard working and motivated. Start 3/8, 1/2

Ph +45 44 68 60 07
Fax +45 44 66 40 36
HUMANA, Box 306, 2630 Tastrup, Denmark
HUMANA1@compuserve.com
www.humana.org



A Nigerian student activist sought sanctuary in Britain only to be driven to attempt suicide. **Victoria Brittain** reports

The broken life of an asylum seeker

IT WAS Enahoro Esemuze's birthday last week. He woke up to it in a strip cell in Rochester prison with no clothes, no pillow, no possessions, just a heavy blanket that smelled bad. Two days earlier, already on suicide watch in the hospital wing, he tried to hang himself.

Enahoro, who was released last Saturday, was in this cold British cell not because he had committed a crime, but because he is a young unknown student activist who sought refuge here after spells in jail, beatings and torture in Nigeria.

He survived those brutalising experiences with only physical scars, but it is Britain and Her Majesty's Home Office, aided by Group 4, that has almost broken him. It is Britain that drove him to wrap a strip of blanket around his throat last week.

When he walked into the visiting area 36 hours later, in a faded tracksuit and with canvas tennis shoes slipping off his feet because he was not allowed laces, he was shaking like a leaf. He looked only at the floor, and was almost unable to speak.

Enahoro had already spent one birthday in British detention. The birthday before that, he said, he was in hiding in Nigeria. He spent his student years just surviving as one of the legion of young, idealistic, well-educated Nigerians in the democracy movement, fed up with the rampant corruption of successive military regimes.

In the democracy movement some are bought off, some give up from exhaustion and some just seek respite. Britain, they know, even under the Conservative government, was in the forefront of international calls for "good governance" and "democracy" in Africa, and the Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, prides himself on his ethical foreign policy. Britain, for them, is the obvious place to look for help when the democracy struggle gets too rough. Until they get here.

Enahoro knows better now. "Rich Nigerians who come here with money they've embezzled, they are welcome," he said. "But an ordinary person like me is put in prison."



A protest outside the Nigerian high commission in London. 'I would be detained at the airport [in Nigeria] . . . I'm not afraid for myself, but for my family,' says asylum seeker Enahoro Esemuze PHOTO GRAHAM TURNER

When Enahoro arrived at London's Heathrow airport in May 1997 he had arranged for distant relatives to meet him, but he never found them. He got confused at immigration, did not know he had to apply immediately for asylum and ended up in Campsfield detention centre outside Oxford, which is run by Group 4.

His relatives visited weekly. He wrote home regularly, hiding from his family the treatment he was getting from the guards, who he said taunted the black refugees with racist remarks and intimidated anyone who complained by having them abruptly moved to a prison or deported.

But the bleakness of Campsfield turned to violence in August 1997. Enahoro and eight other West Africans were thrust into a nightmare. This was the catalyst that brought Enahoro and three of the others to repeated suicide attempts. One teenager is now in a mental hospital. More than half of them have been on medication for depression.

A medical report on Enahoro not only confirms all his stories in meticulous and horrifying detail of torture he endured when he was in Nigeria, from the scars on so many parts of his body, but also warns of the risk of suicide. It states categorically that his psychological health would be made much worse by his being returned to Nigeria, as the Home Office proposes.

HE CAN now never sleep without violent nightmares, cannot eat, has lost 7kg in weight and is racked by pulsating, hammering headaches so severe he sometimes bangs his head on the wall in agony. On the night of his suicide attempt he said the doctor refused him a painkiller, "because I was not eating". Then he whispered, looking down so I could not see his face: "I just could not see how to go on."

In the past 14 months he had been moved five times, with two one-night stays in police stations and two previous admissions to a hospital wing. He had tried once before to commit suicide. He had been naked in a strip cell before, too, at a different prison, Bullingdon. All his possessions were left behind there, and no one in the prison service had bothered to get them back for him.

Enahoro was silent for many minutes, looking down, after talking about how he had felt before the suicide attempt. But later he began to talk about his best friend (who as a minor must be identified as Mr X), and the real Enahoro came back from the depths. "I managed to speak to him on the phone in his hospital and he seems to be getting better," he said.

He and Mr X, who is still very ill, come from the same town, and Enahoro knew his family. In Campsfield they became so close that the young boy would spend all his time with Enahoro and his other Nigerian roommate, Lucky. (Lucky has now been released from prison, but with no papers to prove his status because of Home Office inefficiency.)

This is the Enahoro who studied English Literature at university, wrote poems and had plans to follow his older sister to Lagos and get a job in advertising.

He is a family boy still, and despite his experiences of the past year looks younger than a man who has just turned 27.

Like other Nigerians who have risked everything in the democracy movement, Enahoro does not believe the military are going to have a sudden change of heart. His main fear about being sent back is for his family.

"I would be picked up and detained at the airport, but I know prison in Nigeria and I'm not afraid for myself, only for what might happen to my family, too."

There are moments when he puts his head down again and does not want to meet my eye. His nails are badly bitten. "Although one of my sisters is older than me, you know how it is in Africa: I am the first born and I am responsible for the family . . . What happened with the trial shames me."

At the end of last month he was granted legal aid to bring proceedings in the High Court against the Home Office and Group 4 for malicious prosecution. His solicitor is applying to the High Court for an emergency injunction to prevent his being deported. In Nigeria he would not be able to pursue his case.

What happened that day in August in Campsfield is no longer seriously disputed. After a protest by more than 100 detainees of many nationalities, nine West Africans (three of them teenagers) were brought to court on the serious charge of riot. In some hours of confusion thousands of pounds of damage was done in the centre.

During the trial the prosecution relied mainly on statements from Group 4 eyewitnesses. The defence relied on evidence from the 42 video cameras in Campsfield. What was seen on screen contradicted the written statements, showing the Group 4 guards to be confused.

During the trial, two of the defendants broke down as the Group 4 witnesses repeatedly claimed to have "recognised" defendants who they had not mentioned in their original statements, refused to identify themselves on video and repeatedly contradicted themselves.

The trial ended after the judge directed the jury to acquit. One of the jurors said on leaving the court: "It's Group 4 that should have been on trial, not them."

CLASSIFIED

CAR HIRE

How to win the war of nerves

Stress has become the catchword of our times. But now, **Elaine Showalter** reports, instead of trying to fight stress, people are learning to love it

THIS year a TV cartoon character named Stressed Eric has been appealing to the national psyche as the new British Everyman. Hamlet had melancholy, Jimmy Porter was an angry young man and Eric has stress. From the time he gets up in the morning to face his hung-over au pair till he collapses in bed at night, Eric is pressurised, disorientated and frustrated.

Of course, there's help for Eric if he wants it. Indeed, stress management is to marketing in the nineties what "low-fat" was in the eighties, with more than 400,000 references on the Internet alone. Bookshops have whole sections on calm, inner peace and cutting back. The Complete Idiot's Guide To Managing Stress is in demand and stress-management counsellors make a bundle setting up courses in the workplace. You can soothe your stress with aromatherapy, bubble baths, shiatsu massage, meditation and camomile tea, and decompress with the most popular alternative medicine of all, retail therapy.

But now stress is facing a backlash and people are fighting back. Rohan Candappa, who cites his years as an advertising copywriter as the source of his expertise, has written The Little Book Of Stress, which offers "simple teachings" to help us increase our level of stress — "Because without stress we would all be very, very, very nice. And stomach-churningly contented. And, in all honesty, who wants to live in a world like that?"

American observers have noticed that in the United States the trend is shifting and the new phenomenon is "Thank God it's Monday" as employees joyfully return to the calm, sheltered, supportive and user-friendly environments of the workplace after a stressful weekend at home.

At a recent conference in the UK on Stress: A Change Of Direction, a senior police officer, a TV presenter, actress Dame Judi Dench and even a parachutist defended stress and argued that it aids creativity and performance.

The policeman, Chief Superintendent Brian MacKenzie of the Police Superintendents' Association, worried that police officers spend too much time in counselling with social workers and not enough learning to deal with trauma as part of their job, and developing self-esteem as a result of their ability to cope without panicking.

He believes that instead of therapists counselling officers who have dealt with trauma, the police should be "commended and made to feel good about their role in it".

Stress specialists insist that we are living under more pressure today than ever before because of the rapidity of social change, technological progress and "occupational discontinuity". Health panics and hysterias attend every invention, most recently scaring people about having their brains microwaved by mobile phones.

The main problems are in the workplace, where heavy workloads, inflexible hours, job insecurity and the problems of balancing work and home are alleged to take a terrible toll. Half a million UK employees believe they are suffering work-related stress; 83 per cent of managers now believe stress is a problem. Time taken off has risen five-fold in 40 years and stress-related absences cost UK business $20 billion in 1996.

Several stressed-out employees have successfully sued under the provisions of the 1974 Health and Safety at Work Act. Even some British soldiers who served with the UN forces in Bosnia are suing the Ministry of Defence for post-traumatic stress related to atrocities they saw. And MacKenzie is worried that police officers will start to sue, although dealing with death, disaster and destruction is part of their job.

In the US, where lawsuits are common, employees regularly use sickness time for a "marital health day" of shopping and vegging out. In France, says historian Marc Ferro, stress-related absences from work are replacing the strike as the most basic form of industrial protest.

Stress compensation is certainly a new phenomenon, but stress itself has been a recognised problem for a long time. A century ago, doctors warned that going to university was so stressful for women that they were becoming sterile, and that the pace of modern life would destroy city-dwellers' mental health.

The daily pressures seen as an inevitable part of the human condition, and the crises seen as challenges to be surmounted, became psychologised in the 1950s when Dr Hans Selye popularised the concept of stress as a physical response to psychological demands.

But stress can cover every kind of daily hassle, from a late bus to watching the World Cup. Counsellors recognise at least two varieties of stress — eustress, or the pressure that gets you going and is essential to growth; and distress, the pressure that gets you down. The problem is that my eustress may be your distress. No two individuals exposed to the same stress will react in the same way. The throbbing rap music in the place I get my hair cut is twitch-making to me but relaxing to the young stylists.

You can fight your stress or learn to thrive on it and make it work for you, by using it to trigger change, learning and growth. I used to take time off for hydrotherapy in the swimming pool, where I would happily paddle in the conspicuously-labelled Slow Lane, outpaced by a pregnant woman and a one-legged man. At the end of the day, however, I was just as frazzled. It works much better, I've found, to juggle lots of deadlines and to switch between tasks.

Even personal crisis can be an opportunity, as the former Tory minister David Mellor noted: "What doesn't break you, makes you."

Having a whale of a time

Mark Cocker

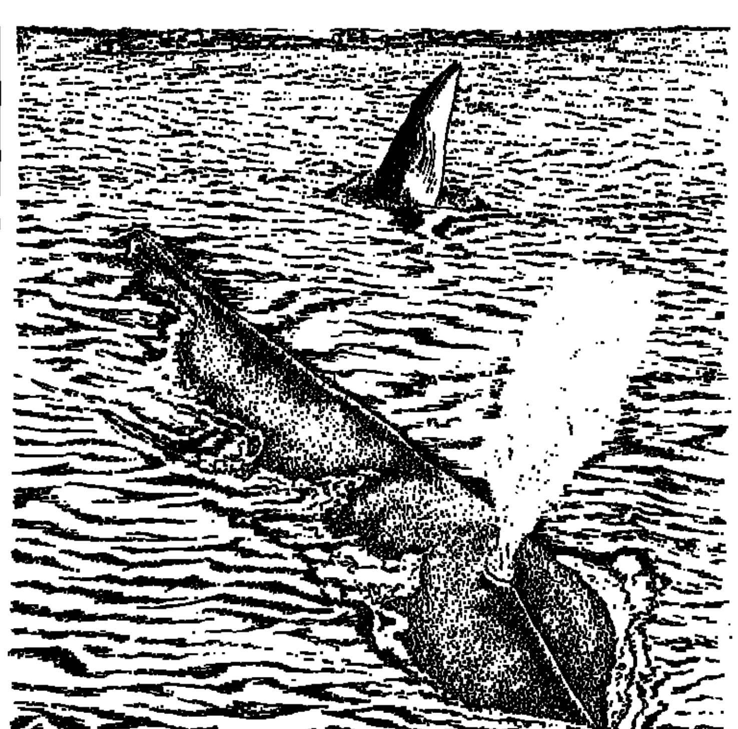
THE Rubha Reigh lighthouse on Scotland's west coast occupies a magical location. To the north its beam sweeps over a stretch of Atlantic Ocean known as The Minch. Beyond one can make out the distant outline of the Hebridean island of Harris, while to the southwest are the dark folds of the Isle of Skye. Normally the weather in this area is unpredictable, but we were doubly fortunate. Every day we enjoyed long hours of uninterrupted sunshine and the breeze was so light the Atlantic looked as flat as a South Sea lagoon.

These were perfect conditions to see the mammals for which the area is famous. Beyond the rocks a party of grey seals gathered each morning and greeted us with their mournful songs, and once we spotted an otter moving almost snake-like through the swell. Every few seconds it would arch its back and dive, and sometimes we could follow its progress by the trail of bubbles; then it would porpoise back to the surface, the upper body rising clear of the water.

But the real joy of Rubha Reigh were the cetaceans. In almost every sweep with our telescopes we seemed to find at least one group of harbour porpoises. Seldom measuring more than 1.5 metres this is one of the smallest species of whale in the world. In Europe it is also the one most likely to be close inshore, rising in a series of shallow arcs when the short dorsal fin scythes briefly above the surface.

Although still the commonest of European cetaceans, harbour porpoises in the Baltic Sea, English Channel and North Sea have declined because of marine pollution and the high mortality rates caused by entanglement in fishing nets.

Around Scottish coasts they also face a different and quite unexpected threat — from dolphins. Despite our current tendency to see the whale nation as a type of marine utopia, it's been proven that bottle-nosed dolphins — the species most often performing stunts in dolphinaria — kill and eat porpoises.


ILLUSTRATION: ANN HOBDAY

In the mornings and evenings the dolphins off Rubha Reigh broke the glass-like surface of The Minch, and for short periods they would ride high through the swell, when their tall, hooked dorsal fins and dark upper backs arched steeply from the water.

Even during this brief exposure one gained a sense of a creature twice the size of the porpoise. But the dolphins looked small when set against the bulk of Rubha Reigh's real prize.

During the summer these waters hold parties of minke whales, one of the family of six rorqual species that includes the largest creature on earth, the blue whale. The minke is the baby of the group, a big female measuring a mere nine metres in length. Even in perfect conditions very little of this shows above the surface.

On several occasions we caught a glimpse of a minke's spout — a diffuse globe of misty spray that instantly vaporised on the breeze. More often we would see one as it came up to breathe, when the upper body protruded as a dark convex line above the horizon. Last to disappear as it rolled under was a short conical dorsal fin almost hindmost on the creature's long back.

Just once we witnessed something much more spectacular. An adult rose four metres into mid-air before its seven tonne bulk crashed back into the ocean. It occupied a matter of seconds in three days of watching but it whetted our appetites for more, and it triggered all sort of imaginings about the whale's inhuman realm of endless water and its other deeper world of fantastic, subliminal darkness.

Chess Leonard Barden

KARPOV and Kasparov wore slightly tarnished crowns last month after both world champions met stiff resistance against lesser opposition. Kasparov won only 5½-4½ from Bulgaria's Topalov in a novel match where both GMs consulted computers during play; while Karpov settled for a 3½-½ win against the Chinese women's team in Beijing.

Karpov's globetrotting even extended to top board in the United States Amateur Team Championship — "amateur", defined as an average rating below the equivalent of a British grade of 200, and allowing four-player teams to field two GMs, a master and a rank beginner. Karpov won all his six games, but his teammates dropped several points so they finished runners-up on tie-break.

Incidentally, the US team event, which always attracts several hundred squads, puts its British equivalents to shame.

Anatoly Karpov-Chris William, US Amateur Teams 1998

1 d4 g6 2 c4 Bg7 3 Nc3 c5 4 d5 Bxc3+ 5 bxc3 f5 The Dzindzi-Indian defence, as self-proclaimed and recommended by GM Roman Dzindzihashvili in his Roman Forum video, which has a wide following among US amateurs. Black's idea is to stop the e2-e4 advance, keep the centre blocked and create counterplay with his knight pair. Such tricky systems can be unpleasant for great champions, and Karpov had an unforgettable experience of this kind when he lost to Tony Miles's 1 e4 a6 in 1980.

6 h4 A normal counter in many opening lines where Black has exchanged a g7 bishop. **d6 7 h5 Qa5 8 Bd2!?** The exclam is because Karpov, knowingly or not, here departs from the video analysis which concentrates on 8 Qc2 and on the trap 8 hxg6? hxg6 9 Rxh8 Qxc3+ 10 Bd2 Qxh8 with a pawn up.

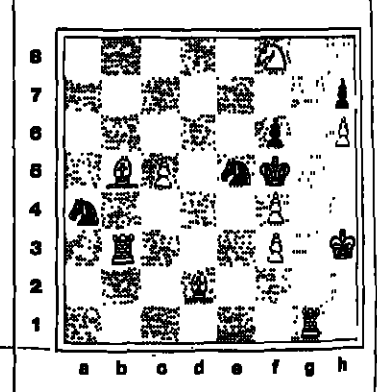
gxh5 9 Nh3 Stronger than 9 Rxh5 Nf6 with Nbd7-e5 when Black has achieved the Dzindzi-Indian's strategic objectives. **Nf6 10 Nf4 Nbd7 11 e3 Ne5 12 Nxh5 Nxh5** Karpov was ready to meet 12 . . . Ne4 by 13 f3 Nxd2 14 Kxd2 followed by Qc2 and Bd3 pressuring Black's weak f5 pawn.

13 Qxh5+ Ng6? The losing move. Karpov in the USCF's excellent magazine Chess Life later recommended 13 . . . Kd8 14 Qg5 Bd7 15 Rh6 Qb6 16 Qg7 Kc7 17 Qxe7 Rae8 followed by Qb2 as critical. Black's activity compensates for his lost pawn.

14 f4! Threatening Bd3 and g4, and ready to meet 14 . . . Bd7 by 15 Qxg6+ winning a piece. **Kd8 15 Bd3 Bd7 16 g4!** Once again the already familiar idea. Now White threatens 17 gxf5 Nf8 18 Qf7 and 19 Qg7 trapping the h8 rook; so Black tries to meet the growing dangers by a flawed plan to catch the white queen.

Be8 17 Qxf5 Ne5 18 fxe5 Bg6 19 Qxg6 Resigns. For if hxg6 20 Rxh8+ and 21 Rxa8 when White is two pieces up.

No 2531



White mates in three moves at latest, against any black defence (by Joseph Blackburne, 1861). The Problemist magazine quotes this little-known but impressive case of Blackburne, then aged only 20, as composer. Unless you know the theme, White's first move will seem irrelevant.

No 2530: 1 . . . Rc8 2 Rnd1 Qg5 wins at least the bishop.

Quick crossword no. 426

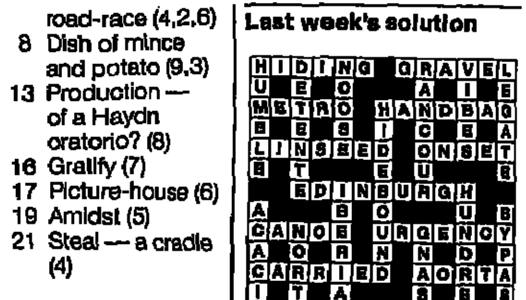
Across

1 Ruler acting during disability of sovereign (6,6)
9 Bisect (5)
10 French country house (7)
11 Commiseration (4)
12 Veered (8)
14 Continue — to stand (6)
15 Alleviation (6)
18 Theatrical (8)
20 Thought (4)
22 Furnish (7)
23 Reminder of times past (5)
24 Parthenon sculptures in British Museum (5,7)

Down

2 Told — of family connection? (7)
3 Want (4)
4 Surpass (6)
5 Scrutinised (8)
6 Upright (5)
7 Major cycle road-race (4,2,6)
8 Dish of mince and potato (9,3)
13 Production — of a Haydn oratorio? (8)
16 Gratify (7)
17 Picture-house (6)
19 Amidst (5)
21 Steal — a cradle (4)

Last week's solution



Bridge Zia Mahmood

I REPORTED some time ago the break-up of the partnership between Bob Hamman and Bobby Wolff, one of the longest-standing and most successful in the history of the game. Another great American partnership dissolved at the same time — that between Paul Soloway and Bobby Goldman. Since then, Hamman and Soloway have formed a new partnership — or to be more accurate, they have renewed an old one. They first played together in the World Team Olympiad in 1972, finishing second to America's great rivals of those days, the Italian Blue Team.

Now, Hamman and Soloway are set to return to the international stage. Their team, including Nick Nickell, Dick Freeman, Jeff Meckstroth and Eric Rodwell has just won the United States international team trial, and will represent their country in the next World Championship for the Bermuda Bowl — appropriately enough in Bermuda in 2000.

The final match of the international trial was desperately close all the way through. At the half-way stage, the scores were level, and only an outrageous piece of good fortune propelled the Nickell team into the lead against their long-time rivals, the team captained by Jimmy Cayne. This was the deal that swung the match for the decisive time in favour of Nickell. North-South vulnerable, dealer South: (see right)

In the Open Room, this was the bidding:

South	West	North	East
Rodwell	Cohen	M'stroth	Berkowitz
1♠	2♦	3♣	3♦
3♥	Pass	4♦	Pass
4♥	Pass	5♥	Pass
6♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

Rodwell's decision to open the nine-point South hand was typical of the aggressive style that has made his partnership with Meckstroth the most feared in the game today. Having opened, of course, he had to see it through — East-West put up a barrage in diamonds, but Rodwell had no qualms about bidding three hearts at his second turn. Meckstroth's four diamonds showed interest in a slam, Rodwell had none for the

North
♠ Q 6
♥ K Q 6
♦ 10 7 5
♣ A K Q 9 2

West
♠ 10 2
♥ 10 2
♦ A K J 8 6 3
♣ 6 4 3

East
♠ K 8 7 5
♥ J 9 7
♦ Q 4 2
♣ J 10 7

South
♠ A J 9 4 3
♥ A 8 5 4 3
♦ 9
♣ 8 5

moment and tried to sign off in four hearts, but Meckstroth pressed on with five hearts. This demanded that Rodwell bid a slam with a diamond control, so bid it he did.

Poor Cohen and Berkowitz. In order to make 12 tricks, Rodwell needed: the heart suit to divide 3-2, the club suit to divide 3-3, and the king of spades to be with East — the hand that had not overcalled. The chances of this are roughly 10 per cent, so nine times out of 10 Rodwell would have failed in his slam. This was the 10th, and this took his team to Bermuda.

Letter from New South Wales Sophie Masson

Basking in splendid isolation

THE 3km walk to our local general store is a delight on these sharply cold, blue-and-gold winter mornings. In the thin pure air the landscape is laid out in front of you like pages from a gorgeous medieval manuscript: the flowing calligraphy of bush and tree and pale native grasses; the rich illuminations of crimson and azure and deep green birds; the kangaroos rising from the grassy margins of the ochre-coloured road like weird heraldic beasts.

There is a sense of timeless calm. You can hear your footsteps crunching on the road, you can almost feel the whoosh of air under a kestrel's body as it drops steeply on to its catch. No one else is about, though there are plenty of signs of human life: a thin curl of wavering smoke, the thud of an axe, the growl of a mower. Sometimes dogs come out of gardens to bark crossly. Once a rumour behind me made me turn: and there was a mob of cattle on the move, ambling along as if the man on the horse behind them and the pickup in front had nothing to do with their excursion. The rumble of a car sounds for a moment like the crunch of a cart's wheels, and its occupant stares and waves, surprised to see someone walking.

For this is the land of the car. In this populated district of rural smallholdings, you see practically nobody. People hide up narrow, twisting tracks in bushland retreats and hardly know their neighbours; the store is the only point of contact for most of us. We're lucky; this is not one of the too-badly depressed areas of rural Australia; the population, though static, has not declined, the banks have not yet started deserting us. Families have put new life in the schools and social clubs; have brought in new ideas, houses, goodwill, dreams of a return to traditional lifestyles. People have chickens and vegetable gardens, and sell surplus fruit.

Yet the rural dislocation is still profound. For this was once agricultural land, but jobs on the land have all but disappeared, and long-settled families are losing their properties to the banks while the One Nation party is scouting around for candidates to stand in what has always been rich National party heartland. In this beautiful place, rancour has grown — not quite as much as in others, but enough.

It's hard to understand just how isolated Australian rural life can be. We are 600km from Sydney and 500km from Brisbane, on the ancient spine of the Great Divide; to the east is the coastal strip where five out of six Australians now live (50km or less from the coast). To the west is the rapidly emptying farmland.

Modern Australia is not a rural nor yet an urban society, but a suburban one. Rural values, folk culture and heritage have slipped from national consciousness in Australia. Last month I was talking to a local musician who has recorded a wonderful collection of regional folk songs, which clearly show the subtle patterns of rural culture, the interactions of the indigenous people and the European settlers. Yet, despite its importance, he was unable to find an Australian record company interested, and had to go to Cumbria in Britain to find the enthusiasm and understand ing of folk culture.

The national ethos of egalitarianism was basically a rural one; the Australian Labor party was born among shearers and farm-workers, not among urban workers. That ethos always included in its flip side a sense of rancour and resentment — and a kind of self-protective racism. In times of stress that is what came out most strongly. Now that even Aboriginal people mostly live in towns (72 per cent in 1996, as opposed to 27 per cent in 1966) the stresses of an egalitarian society fast hardening into a semi-hierarchical one are becoming increasingly apparent.

That angry sense of feeling harried and hemmed in by alien crowds is apparent not only on the right, but on the left, among people who claim that Australia's immigration must be reduced if not curtailed, because it is supposedly "overpopulated".

Rat-children disfigured for profit

Richard Galpin in Gujrat

AT THE entrance to the shrine of Shah Daula in the city of Gujrat, in Pakistan's Punjab province, a young woman sits on the edge of a chair, rocking back and forth.

At first sight she could be one of the many devotees who travel from afar to worship at the tomb of the Sufi saint. But move closer and it is clear something is wrong. The woman has a shrunken head and deep facial scars. Her hair has been shaved and she cannot speak. She is severely disabled.

She is one of hundreds or possibly thousands of Shah Daula's *chuhas* or rat-children. For centuries they have been associated with this shrine as part of a powerful myth that holds sway over many people in this region.

Filing past her into the shrine are dozens of worshippers, mostly women. They sit by the tomb, touch the relics placed on it and pray. They ask God to bless them with a child. These women have not been able to conceive but, according to the myth that dates back 300 years, praying here will make them fertile.

However, there is a heavy price to pay: couples must promise to hand over their first-born to the shrine. The myth says the child will be born a *chuha* and if they do not give the baby up all their subsequent children will be disabled.

But the grim reality behind this tradition can be found just a few kilometres from Shah Daula's shrine on the streets of Gujrat, where many of the rat-children end up.

At the city's main bus station several older rat-children roam between the buses, followed closely by their owners — people who say they have bought the children to look after them. But looking after them means using them to make money from begging. And they are extremely effective.

Conveniently, the myth states that the rat-children have been blessed by the saint and must not be ignored. And so the money pours in.

"It's reported that these children are sold for anything from around $1,000 to $2,000," says Anusheh Hussain, director of Sahil, an organisation fighting child exploitation. "We've also heard that they can make around $10 per day from begging, which makes it a very lucrative business considering that's twice the amount a civil servant makes."


A woman outside the shrine of Shah Daula has the distinctive shrunken head and scars of the rat-children PHOTOGRAPH: RICHARD GALPIN

This has led to deep suspicion that the myth of Shah Daula was fabricated to trick people into handing over healthy babies.

One expert who interviewed several families says many parents told him their babies were not deformed when they gave them up.

Historical accounts make this argument more compelling: the descendants of the saint had no land on which they could depend for their livelihood and so needed to find some means of generating income. Many therefore believe that the rat-children, far from being a natural phenomenon, are deliberately deformed by the people who take them from their parents. Once the process is complete, several years later, they are sold off or hired out as beggars.

Although there is no irrefutable evidence, experts say that medieval contraptions are used to disfigure the children.

These charges are denied by those associated with the shrine. A descendant of the saint, Dr Pir Nasiruddaula, argues that the deformity is caused by a congenital disease that occurs in other parts of the world.

But Pakistan's leading genetic scientist, Qasim Mehdi, who spent three years investigating Shah Daula's rat-children, says this is impossible. After interviewing dozens of families, he found that none of the children were related.

"If there is no blood relationship between them then it cannot be a genetic disease," he says.

Notes & Queries Joseph Harker

***WHEN* and why did the practice of the UK monarch having a separate official day begin? Do other countries' monarchs do likewise?**

THE obvious reason is to improve the chance of decent weather for the celebrations. The Queen's real birthday in late April would just about be a feasible date to troop the colour on, though risky. In Luxembourg, the Grand Duke's real birthday is in January but, to avoid his troops having to parade in the snow, his birthday is celebrated every year on June 23. The striking difference is that in Luxembourg the date is a national holiday. — *Henry Wickens, Waldbillig, Luxembourg*

"*SHE'LL* be coming round the mountain when she comes," promises the old song. Who was she? Did she arrive?

SHE was the railway steam engine. The song dates back to the times of the railway construction to the West in the United States, in the second half of the last century. I don't think it refers to any specific mountain and she did certainly arrive. — *José Miyara, Rosario, Argentina*

***THE* totals given for those killed by Stalin, etc, include deaths from starvation as a result of policy. Famines were not unusual in Britain's Indian empire, so can any British imperial figures be counted among history's mass murderers?**

SUCH questions are often muddled by attempting to assess personal responsibility. Karl Polanyi noted that the destruction of the Indian village system of distribution and its replacement by a market system led inevitably to famine: cash in hand rather than availability of food determined whether one could eat. Amartya Sen has claimed that there was more food available in Bengal in 1943 — when 3 million died of starvation — than in 1942, when the impact of the famine was much less. The difference was that wages did not keep up with prices, and the poor did not have cash in hand. As in Ireland in 1846, British rulers could not imagine that a market system could be other than beneficial. Equally, US bombing in Cambodia (1970-1975) eliminated 70 per cent of the draft animals on which food production depended, but Pol Pot was blamed for the resulting famine. Sometimes the answers are more complicated than the question implies. — *Jordan Bishop, Ottawa, Canada*

***IS IT* true that Benito Mussolini once had a play of his performed in London?**

BENITO MUSSOLINI'S and Giovacchino Forzano's play, Campo Di Maggio, was performed in an adaptation by John Drinkwater under the title Napoleon: The Hundred Days at the New Theatre (now the Albery). It opened on April 18, 1932, and played for 32 performances. Napoleon was played by Robert Atkins, who also produced it. — *Richard Mangan, Beckenham, Kent*

***ALMOST* all dogs eat "anything". Why, then, are they so fussy about fruit?**

MY PARENTS have a springer spaniel who loves fruit. He will eat apples, oranges and bananas. If the fruit bowl is left at his level he will help himself to plums and grapes and while out walking he will even pluck blueberries from the hedgerow. — *Jodie Whiteley, Amedzofe, Volta Region, Ghana*

Any answers?

WHO* was the first authenticated named individual in history? — *Alex Gordon, London

IF HOT* cakes sold so well, how come everyone stopped selling them? — *Alan Paterson, London

MOSQUITOES* from Italy to Russia are vicious painful pests; British mosquitoes are rare and seem to have little taste for human blood. Why? — *Lem Sadko, London

Answers should be e-mailed to weekly@guardian.co.uk, faxed to 0171/+44171-242-0985, or posted to The Guardian Weekly, 75 Farringdon Road, London EC1M 3HQ. The Notes & Queries website is at http://nq.guardian.co.uk/

Love was in the air

Marc Chagall was a poet, a mystic, the man who lost his heart to Bella Rosenfeld. **Rachel Barnes** reports

JUST weeks before war was declared in 1914, Marc Chagall took a train to his past. He had come to Paris three years earlier as a poor young Russian Jew, with no money and no place to stay. He was leaving as a famous painter, who counted Apollinaire, Diaghilev and Modigliani as friends.

So why return to Russia, where Jews were persecuted and many could not leave their tumbledown *stetls* without a permit?

The reason was Bella.

Chagall had met the beautiful and gifted Bella Rosenfeld just before leaving his home in Vitebsk. They had fallen instantly and, as it transpired, lastingly, in love. "Her pale face, her eyes. How big, round and black they are! They are my eyes, my soul. I knew that this was she — my wife," he wrote after their first meeting. It was after this encounter that images of lovers floating in romantic ecstasy in starlit skies began to appear in his work. Even fame and Paris could not get Bella out of Chagall's head.

As the world collapsed around them, Marc and Bella, who had married in 1915, were cocooned by their love for each other. In Over The Town, the lovers, recognisably Marc and Bella, float in a dream-like trance, high above the rooftops of Vitebsk. They appear oblivious of anything but their own love.

The image is one of Chagall's most striking, but the idea was probably Bella's. She was the more intellectual of the two, sent by her wealthy family to school and university in Moscow. And it was probably a piece of her writing, in which she describes running out to the outskirts of Vitebsk to pick wild flowers for Chagall's birthday, that at least inspired the picture.

"I suddenly felt as if I were taking off," she wrote. "Your head turned down to mine and, brushing against my ear, you whispered something. I listened as your deep, soft voice sang to me, a song echoed in your eyes. Then together we floated up above the room with all its finery, and flew."

If Bella's description is one clue to Chagall's obsession with flight, another is the mysticism in which Russia's Hasidic communities were soaked. The Yiddish expression "He walks over the city" — which describes a beggar moving from door to door — stands for the persecution of the Jewish people, the eternal wanderers.

Despite this imaginative rebirth, the revolution years were hard for Chagall, Bella and their baby daughter, Ida. Then, in 1921, Chagall was invited to decorate the State Jewish Theatre in Moscow, and design its opening productions. But as the stage was so tiny, he decided to decorate the entire auditorium, working day and night to finish the job in a month.

His paintings covered the ceiling and every wall. No space was left unpainted. On the ceiling he painted a variation of his Lovers theme while on one long wall he painted the hugely ambitious Introduction To The Jewish Theatre. All the murals — now the centrepiece of a show at London's Royal Academy until October 4 — were executed in tempera on canvas, so they could be taken down and preserved.

The theatre company was such a success that by the end of 1921 it moved to larger premises. Chagall's canvases were moved to the foyer on the first floor of the new building. In 1947 they were removed, rolled up and stored underneath the stage with old sets. Then, in 1948, the brutal murder of the Jewish actors, the Mikhoels, signalled the start of a Stalinist pogrom. The State Jewish Theatre was destroyed.

The canvases stayed rolled up for 40 years. They did not see light again until 1973, when Chagall, now aged 86, had a burning desire to return to his homeland for the first time since his exile in the twenties. KGB officers whose role was to suppress interest in things Jewish stood grimly by as the artist's work was rolled out in front of him. Chagall broke down in tears when he saw the painting of the Lovers. Bella had died nearly 30 years before.

Chagall consistently played down the Jewish thing, loath to be described as a Jewish artist. He believed his work carried a universal meaning. And his enormous popularity confirms this. But since his death in 1985 a radical reassessment of his work has taken place. His symbols and themes are indisputably inspired by Hasidic life, his own special culture, that had sustained Jews through troubled times in Russia for two centuries. And nowhere more than in those murals he painted for the State Jewish Theatre in Moscow in 1920.



Lovers in Pink (1916) . . . one of a series of works by Chagall for the State Jewish Theatre that portray his romantic ecstasy with Bella

Fitting tribute strikes all the right notes

CLASSICAL MUSIC
Andrew Clements

A ***CONCERT*** **that can boast a line-up of Claudio Abbado, Daniel Barenboim, Teresa Berganza and Radu Lupu isn't an everyday event. But the tribute at London's Barbican to Peter Diamand, the German-born Dutch impresario who was the much admired and respected artistic director of the Edinburgh Festival in the 1960s and 1970s and who died in January this year, brought them together — the kind of special mix of talents that had been one of the strengths of Diamand's own festival programming.**

All of the performers involved had a special relationship with Diamand. He it was who was responsible for giving Barenboim his first opera to conduct at Edinburgh in 1973, and who became artistic adviser to the Orchestre de Paris when Barenboim was its music director, who introduced Lupu to the festival when he was still a very young man, and who persuaded Berganza to sing the role of Carmen for the first time in a memorable production that was one of the highest summits of his Edinburgh directorship.

All these elements were woven into this skilfully judged programme, which always carried the special charge of impromptu, inspired music-making. A celebration it may have been, but there were no short cuts in the standards of performance: the way in which Barenboim pumped up the musicians for the overture to The Marriage of Figaro signalled that; the articulation was razor sharp, the woodwind solos precisely characterised.

Mozart's Concerto for Two Pianos was miraculous, with effortless dovetailing of lines and a wonderful flow of ideas between the two intriguingly contrasted pianists. Barenboim is the more assertive player, brighter toned, rhythmically more propulsive, Lupu the more withdrawn poet, shading each phrase with elegant purity.

After the interval, and a short, expertly judged spoken tribute to Diamand from John Drummond — another former director of the Edinburgh Festival — Lupu returned on his own to play Brahms's Three Intermezzi Op 117, in a strange, unworldly way, paying his own respects to Diamand's memory with utter intimacy and total understatement.

Then, before Abbado closed the concert with extracts from Schubert's Rosamunde score, it was Berganza's turn; of course, her voice is not what it was when she cut such a dash as Carmen 20 years ago, but what vocal resources she has are used with perfect stylishness and a spot-on sense of timing. She delivered a sly, knowing aria from Rossini's Turco In Italia, and then, naturally, the Habanera from Carmen, as deliciously suggestive as ever. Peter Diamand, surely, would have loved it.

Drowning in a world of colour

ART
Adrian Searle

PATRICK Heron at 78 is as funny, waspish and acute an individual as ever. Still painting, still talking, still railing. He talks, without embarrassment, about the aesthetic sense of things. What other artist — let alone critic — uses the word "aesthetic" nowadays? It is as rare a word as "beauty" in relation to current art, and we need all the beauty we can get. We live in barbarous times.

Or just different times. Whatever the merits and limitations, the pleasures and shortfalls, of Patrick Heron's paintings, he has been a central figure in the development of post-war British art. He was an early champion of the New York School painters in the fifties. He argued about the way in which the Americans later re-wrote history, stealing the thunder of the British — and in particular the St Ives painters of his own generation.

He campaigned vigorously against the absorption of our art schools into the polytechnics in the seventies (and look at them now — the underfunded charm schools of the new universities). Many of these battles Heron fought in the pages of the Guardian. Most of all, he argued for painting, for colour, for pictorial space and what it could do. What an odd bee to have in his bonnet, one might think. He was even sacked as art critic of the New Statesman for banging on about space and colour in painting, week after week. This, clearly, was a man obsessed.

The Tate has collected Heron's acerbic writings in a useful volume to coincide with its retrospective, showing until September 6. Heron, who disdained Margaret Thatcher's repeated offer of a knighthood, more than deserves proper recognition. The only question is, how good is he as a painter?

It all depends what you want from painting. Colour and shape and space — and the painter's touch — are Heron's abiding preoccupations. There is something exhilarating and intensely pleasurable about his paintings, from first to last.

For Heron, painting is more pleasurable than sex. Maybe the pleasure of colour — of losing oneself in colour — is an *equivalent* of sex, and sensuality is what the British are afraid of, as a nation. This is more than a matter of abstractions.

Heron reminds us that the world is sensual, and that humans crave visual pleasure. It was Susan Sontag who said that what art needs is not so much aesthetics as erotics, and for all Heron's dryness as a critic, the erotic nature of his painting is as plain as day. Which is not to say he's ever slappy-go-happy. He has always been the most intelligent of painters.

Description always recomplicates what's there, and we find ourselves telling a story, even of abstractions. In Heron's case that story, as much as it will be about brushstrokes, quantities of emerald or ribbons of lemon, often comes back to islands of colour — the field patterns of west Cornwall, the bays and promontories of the coast, stones on the beach and ferns in crevices.

But as much as we look to paintings for a mimesis with the world, they also exist in their own terms. A violet comma, an orange lozenge, a chip of blue are just what they are. Coming to the close of Heron's retrospective, there's an exhilarating rashness and brevity about the late paintings, and the way they acknowledge the world about him — the landscape, the garden, the Cornish light. The roof of the house is scribbled in with paint drawn straight from the tube. Flowers and foliage are cartooned in, overlaid with a meaningless track of blobs, fumbled over and smudged with errant smears. Once, he'd never have let himself go like this. Now it just seems natural. His late paintings have a marvellous, hapless authority. He's a painter painting.

For all the careful thinking that permeates his writing, Heron has always been the fastest of painters, a painter whose works appear caught in the act. He sets up the conditions for painting, then lets go. Heron's paintings are about colour, its containment and spread.

They are about edges and contours and fullness and emptiness, openness and closure. They are about how the same colour can look utterly different depending on what other colours it is adjacent to, and how the perception of colour, its volume and mass and intensity, is altered by the character of its boundaries, how it rubs up to the colour next to it.

I think of Patrick Heron's paintings hanging in a room — not in a museum, but in a house. Real life goes on, day after day, in front of them. They are a backdrop to living. As we pass in front of them, the colour of our clothes, our hair, our skin, is silhouetted against them.

Paintings such as Heron's don't tell you what to think or feel. The occasion they give — as a discussion point about the relationship between British and American post-war painting, or about modernist space, or about St Ives versus Manhattan — is secondary to the painting's persistent enigma, or rather the enigma of why we look at paintings and become so engrossed.

Another great idea goes down the pan

TELEVISION
Nancy Banks-Smith

FOLLOWING the well-flattened trail of the Two Fat Ladies, Richard Seymour and Dick Powell are brightening summer schedules by redesigning articles of an intimate and embarrassing nature. Last week the bra. This week the loo.

Dick, though blessed with clear-cut features and a film-star name, could pass in a crowd. Richard *is* a crowd.

Designs On Your . . . Loo (Channel 4) seemed mainly for the benefit of men. Women have been sympathetically catered for. John Christie, I remember, provided different-sized loo seats in the ladies' lavatory at Glyndebourne because, he said, prima donnas' bottoms varied enormously.

Apparently the ordinary domestic loo is inconvenient for men. The problem seems to be what Sir Les, Barry Humphries's Australian cultural attaché, calls pointing Percy at the porcelain.

"This," said Richard surveying the basic bowl with distaste, "would defeat William Tell, let alone the average pissed Yorkshireman." As they were designing for a Yorkshire firm, this might have been more tactfully phrased. The lads do have a cheery way of stirring it.

We'll come to Princess Anne later.

Shires is a Yorkshire firm at the middle to bottom end of the market (the subject is all too prone to puns). Charles, its man with the moustache, wanted "a modern classic suite with a hint of revival". Richard and Dick wanted "a better bog". You already feared the worst.

Very instructive, this sort of programme. I bet you didn't know that Professor Alexander Kira is the acknowledged world expert on urination and defecation. A difficult man, you feel, to seat at a dinner party. His seminal work, The Bath Room, is lavishly illustrated with men straining at the stool ("the modified squat posture") but no manufacturer has put his ideas into practice. It's an anally retentive trade.

Japanese loos, of course, are at the electronic edge. They will massage you with water to ease constipation (Japanese are prone to piles) and diplomatically drown the sound of your activities. "This," said Richard with awe, "is the toilet that goes to the toilet for you." The Japanese are even researching the self-cleaning toilet — a body blow for bleach. Enzymes eat the bacteria for the life of the loo. And you thought *you* had a rotten job.

Richard and Dick designed a new loo with a raised bowl at the back, a flush in the seat and fluent lines. Charles produced a revised design with all these features missing.

It was now that Richard and Dick felt moved to point out that Charles's version was Princess Anne and their version was Claudia Schiffer. "In a warm, totally toilety sort of way," added Richard after a pause. And, after another, "There goes my OBE."

I have a certain sneaky sympathy for Charles. Of my life's work, only one sentence will survive in most modern books of quotations. I said that if you had to keep the lavatory door shut by extending the left leg, it was modern design. It seems to have struck a chord.

A tiny comedy began to bud and flourish of its own accord in Funny Women (BBC2), which celebrated Patricia Routledge. Alan Bennett wrote one of his Talking Heads for her. It was probably the finest thing she ever did. She didn't want to do it at the time because it was a monologue and she thought nobody would watch. Bennett pointed out that newsreaders are talking heads too. She said, "Yes, but you cut from the newsreader every so often to atrocities, and so you get a *break*."

According to Bennett, she is a great friend of Betty Boothroyd, the Speaker of the House of Commons, and you do see the similarity. It is arguable, at least for 10 minutes, that all funny women are bossy. "My ambition," she said "was to be a Go-Ahead Headmistress."

Bennett was in his Yorkshire home. Through the window you could see tiny, Lowry-like people passing. Once, when he mentioned a dog, a dog appeared in the street. There was a stream and, outside the window, a huge crane with a massive and menacing hook. My God, what is that? I found myself looking over Bennett's shoulder. Hate it when people do that to me.

"Suggest termination of old personnel before they have the chance to retire and collect the accrued retired benefits. Destroy this tape" — JR's first words in the rerun of Dallas (daily on UK Gold).

"Remember the little things. Open doors for her. Tell her she's gorra nice frock on. Don't stare at the wig" — Alex Gilroy on the social graces (Coronation Street).

Flying the flag for fascism . . . Fiona Shaw, centre, as Miss Jean Brodie PHOTOGRAPH: TRISTRAM KENTON

A triumph over diversity

THEATRE
Michael Billington

WHY is London's National Theatre reviving The Prime Of Miss Jean Brodie? Presumably as a vehicle for Fiona Shaw and in order to put bums on seats. But one wonders whether these were quite the priorities another distinguished Shaw, William Archer and Granville Barker had in mind when they campaigned so vigorously for a subsidised national playhouse at the start of the century.

The National has to mix pragmatism and idealism. But I believe Trevor Nunn, in pursuing a populist programme, is playing a dangerous game. For a start he is sacrificing diversity of repertoire: this summer the National boasts only one work pre-dating the 1940s and even that, The London Cuckolds, is a modern adaptation of an old text. Also Nunn is playing into the enemy's hands: if the National presents work that could easily be mounted in the commercial sector, how do those of us who support it make the case for its continued subsidy?

Jean Brodie exemplifies the problem. Muriel Spark's brilliant novel has enjoyed a long life as play, film and TV series and was last seen in the West End only four years ago. So why do it again? One answer is that Jay Presson Allen has revised her adaptation, and for the better. She has dropped the clumsy framing device in which an ex-Brodie pupil, now a best-selling nun, is subjected to journalistic interview. But I still find it hard to believe that there is an overwhelming need for revised versions of novel adaptations.

The moral tone of Phyllida Lloyd's production is also worrying. Miss Brodie is an Edinburgh teacher who both inspires and enslaves her pupils. She preaches the virtues of Art, Truth and Beauty, lectures her pupils on Giotto and reminds them that education, stemming from the root words 'e' and 'duco' means a leading out. But, as someone wittily said, her enthusiasm for everything Italian causes her gradually to supplant the ideals of *e duco* with the fascism of Il Duce. It is this that triggers her downfall.

Spark's novel is ambivalent about its heroine: Lloyd's production goes out of its way to exculpate her. Right from the start it forges a link between the dominating dominie and her ultimate betrayer. It shows Miss Brodie surrounded by her adoring pupils in a parody of The Last Supper, and at one point a Judas kiss is planted on her cheek. The unnerving thought occurs that Lloyd sees Brodie as a female Christ destroyed by a close disciple. It is an absurd parallel: where Christ was a political rebel who defied Roman rule, Brodie is a slavish, if naive, devotee of Italian fascism.

Fortunately Fiona Shaw's performance is varied enough to escape the defining concept. In the early scenes, as she leads the girls on Edinburgh jaunts with jutting bum and pork-pie hat, she brings out the spinsterish oddity as well as the Socratic zeal of Miss Brodie. She also heightens the character's theatricality and her self-delighting recklessness. Shaw's own comic spark is released by that of Dame Muriel, and for that we should be duly grateful.

But, although there is decent support from Susannah Wise as the deceptive Sandy and Nicholas Le Prevost as the paedophile art-master, one is left wondering what this play is doing on the Lyttelton stage. The National was created to offer an alternative to the commercial theatre: with the arrival of a blatant star-vehicle such as this, it looks more like a pale carbon-copy.

Hurt's so good

CINEMA
Gaby Wood

BRITISH director Richard Kwietniowski's debut feature, **Love and Death on Long Island**, intricately evokes a meeting of disparate worlds. Based on Gilbert Adair's novel, the film's main source of attention is John Hurt, who plays the reserved English writer Giles De'Ath. The people he comes into contact with — in the video shop, or when trying to buy a TV — would say he hasn't lived in the real world for some time, but now that he's entering it his life becomes less real than ever.

Thinking that he is about to see a film adaptation of an E M Forster novel, Giles stumbles upon a piece of tacky teen pulp and falls in love with its male star. He starts buying fanzines, rents videos and shuts himself in with a portrait of his dead wife and his fantasies of new love Ronnie Bostock (Beverly Hills 90210's Jason Priestley).

Hurt is vulnerable and obtuse, his face a maze of storytelling wrinkles. The film is extraordinary at this point: it exists in the oak-panelled shadows of the writer's home and mind, and lovingly evokes the birth of his obsession. Its uneventful, slow madness is gripping.

As soon as Giles arrives in Long Island and meets Bostock, the film changes. It's jaunty and bright, but much less interesting — it melts away and ends too neatly. Still, it's a credit to the director that he can do both these things, and Hurt and Priestley are beautifully mismatched, with neither pretending to be anything but what they are.

The risks infamously taken by documentary-maker Nick Broomfield have come into their own with **Kurt and Courtney**. Planned as a film about the apparent suicide of grunge-god Kurt Cobain, after censorship and legal threats from Cobain's partner Courtney Love it has become a film about Love too — her past, her ambition and her possible part in his death.

Because of what can't be shown, Broomfield has attempted to make a polemic out of the film's failures. But he's on weak ground this time.

There is a roster of colourful characters — smudgy Seattle girls, a raving ex-lover, an S&M rock star, a mad dad and a private dick. Broomfield's deadpan repetition of the ends of interviewees' absurd sentences can be very funny, and he hires a couple of moronic investigators who blow every opportunity and turn all of their scenes into knockabout comedy.

But he seems to have a surprisingly bad instinct for story in this film, or for when things should be scrapped. Love's father has written a book implying she might have had a part in murdering Cobain. Cobain's best friend bought the gun that killed him, someone claims to have been hired to do the job. But these are facts and not narratives. They don't lead anywhere.

Other details, however, point to something more spooky: two Cobain fans killed themselves in a double copycat suicide, and when the S&M man is found dead Broomfield's crew form part of the evidence. But he makes little of these elements.

Most curiously, he leaves his fleeting interview with Courtney Love for the end, using it as his *pièce de résistance*. Maybe the film needed that for momentum, but the placing shows an insensitivity to her lure. As soon as we see her, Love lights up the screen — she is slick, beautiful, beguiling and, had she been introduced earlier on, she might have been a more convincing *femme fatale*.

As it is, Kurt And Courtney seems a labour of hate, full of feeble excuses and sluggish charisma. It's just another way of saying "the dog ate my homework".



The odd couple . . . Hurt and Priestley, beautifully mismatched

The poet in the prose

James Wood

The Day-Star of Liberty: William Hazlitt's Radical Style
by Tom Paulin
Faber 382pp £22.50

THE REASON for William Hazlitt's singularity is his fine lack of centrality. He bristles on a hundred margins — as a critic, an essayist, a journalist, a lay-philosopher — and perhaps has spent himself too lavishly everywhere. As an aesthetician he seems merely impressionistic besides the greatness of Schiller; he is a great critic, and yet on the one hand he has little of the systematic devotion of, say, Ruskin, and on the other he lacks those flashes of absurd genius that make Coleridge such an exciting analyst; unlike De Quincey, whom he resembles, there is no single book that polishes his essence.

Yet Hazlitt did one thing supremely well: prose. He is our Melville of English prose, as Shakespearean as Melville, with as great a relish for adjectives and adverbs. It is this Hazlitt whom Tom Paulin, in his fine and completely original study, celebrates. Paulin, in a series of scouring arcs, breaks the prose up, reads it as verse, and tells the semantic biographies of certain of Hazlitt's favourite words. As we now expect from Paulin, he rolls himself in textures, always trying to feel the sensuality of Hazlitt's writing on his skin, and to convey it to his readers.

In essays such as "The Fight" and "My First Acquaintance With Poets" (his account of his first few meetings with Coleridge, in 1798), in the extraordinary collection of profiles published in 1825 called The Spirit Of The Age, Hazlitt made himself the most rigorously metaphorical — and thus the most poetic — of English prose writers. As in Melville, there is sometimes a mania, and almost a despair, in Hazlitt's wild use of metaphor. Outside Moby Dick and a Shakespearean soliloquy, there is nothing quite like his writing in literature in English.

Hazlitt wrote that Burke's prose was always "running away with a subject and from it at the same time", but it better describes his own writing, for his simultaneous combination of parallelism and drift is the very motion of metaphor. Hazlitt's habit of weaving quotes by Milton, Shakespeare, and many others into his prose — which Paulin brilliantly analyses — may be seen as a recognition that we are always swimming in metaphor, including all the great poets' metaphors.

Hazlitt was born into a family of Unitarian radicals. The Unitarians supported the American, and then the French, Revolution. Here Paulin is invaluable, providing political lineages, showing how dominated Unitarianism was by Scottish and Ulster thinkers. (Hazlitt's father was Irish.) Unitarians denied the trinity, and the divinity of Christ, and were thus subject to discrimination and at times persecution as Dissenters.

Hazlitt can sometimes weary the reader with his jubilant, breathless enthusiasm. At such moments, one senses that Hazlitt's heir is Emerson, the Unitarian minister who exchanged the sermon for the lecture. The Emerson who, following Jeremy Taylor and Hazlitt, wrote that "life itself is a bubble and a scepticism" in his essay "Experience". Paulin never mentions Emerson, never mentions the destiny of Unitarianism in America. Still, what is important about this book is not really Paulin's insistent politics but his hustling poetics.

By the end we have spent 300 pages knee-deep in Hazlitt's prose, as Paulin's own knuckly writing, with its hard, oral clatter, and its delicate twists of poetry, drives us through Hazlitt's. There is a critical concatenation here, between the early 19th century critic and the late 20th century critic. When Paulin writes of Hazlitt that "prose needs to represent the swell, the stretch, the imprint of the moment", he is writing of himself, and justifiably. Hazlitt belongs in the great line of intensely metaphorical writers of prose, which includes Melville and James, and Woolf (who did not care for Hazlitt, but resembles him more than she knew).

Those who already love Hazlitt's writings will be reunited with old flames; and those who do not will touch a new heat, thanks to Tom Paulin's book, a lovely act of amorous rekindling.

Paperbacks

Fiachra Gibbons

Radcliffe, by David Storey (Vintage, £6.99)

KENNETH Halliwell was reading Radcliffe one night in 1967 when he took a hammer to his lover Joe Orton. Radcliffe, you'll have guessed, contains a pretty nasty murder with a hammer. And who said the novel has lost its power to move? There's a great muscularity about Storey's writing, which you expect from an ex-Rugby League player, but also an ambivalence that you don't. It was here that we first encountered the terrible inevitability you find in This Sporting Life, the novel which followed it, and which made his name. Great stuff.

Zuckerman Bound, by Philip Roth (Vintage, £8.99)

NO, ROTH has not, as the title suggests, discovered the joys of domination. His has always been the solitary vice. You either think he captures the spirit of the age or he's the most suspect solipsist of them all. I tend towards the former. There is nothing tossed off about these four stories; he's still got more gears, ducks and diatribes than Mohammed Ali at his peak. He can be outrageous, obscene, tender, funny, insightful and plain stupid, all in the same sentence.

Shadows of Empire, by Alan Massie (Vintage, £6.99)

NOT many writers allow you to nod off and not miss much. But there is something reliable and old-fashioned about Alan Massie. Predictable? Yes. Plodding? Often. But he gets there. Like the dogged Lowland Scots who did the dirty work of Empire and were never quite welcome at the top table. This is a book about four brothers of that stout breed. One is a Mosleyite, one a closet homosexual communist, another a war correspondent in Spain; the fourth a rubber planter. It sounds clichéd, but there is plenty to temper Scotland's new found nationalism. Even if he is a Tory.

The Burglar in the Library, by Lawrence Block (No Exit Press, £5.99)

IF YOU ever come across a self-consciously post-modern amateur detective, prone to quoting Kipling or Spinoza, shoot him on the spot. Future generations will thank you. Bernie Rhodenbarr, a secondhand bookseller and occasional burglar, is far from the most annoying of this ubiquitous breed. In fact, he'd be likeable if he wasn't such a smart-ass. This one, kosher Cluedo in a New England mansion, is chocka with little homages to Chandler and Christie. As they say in the old country, leave it out, mate.

Getting Back Brahms, by Mavis Cheek (Faber, £6.99)

AT LAST, something for those poor gels encumbered with a brain. Sick to the teeth with Ally McBeal, bored with Bridget Jones's Diary, think your bottom is too big to worth bothering about, then Mavis Cheek is your woman. We're talking chucklesome rather than belly laughs here, but you'd need to be dim indeed not to enjoy this tale of a hilariously maudlin, single, thirtysomething bookshop owner unable to stop thinking about sex or her lost man.

A lot of old cobblers

Neal Ascherson

Uncommon People: Resistance, Rebellion and Jazz
by Eric Hobsbawm
Weidenfeld & Nicolson 352pp £20

***TO RESCUE* the experience of common people "from the enormous condescension of posterity" (that phrase coined by the late E P Thompson) became the slogan of a generation of labour historians.**

The emphasis in history-writing, above all in France and Britain, has changed so much since Thompson wrote those words that they are no longer as poignant as they were. Posterity, meaning us, no longer condescends to the dead who were not warriors, princes, capitalists or intellectuals. The pendulum swung so far towards "social history" that it is now just beginning to move back, on the return swing of fashion towards national and diplomatic narratives.

Eric Hobsbawm spans all these phases. In the past 12 months he has reached the age of 80, been dubbed a Companion of Honour and become informally enthroned as Britain's leading historian.

He is best known for his grand synoptic "Ages" series, from Age Of Revolution (1962) to Age Of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century (1994). But he began his career as an economic and social historian, from the same leftwing stable as Thompson. There were two main differences between them. Hobsbawm's field was much wider and more international than Thompson's The Making Of The English Working Class. And Hobsbawm's instinct always told him that rescue from condescension was not enough.

The point was not just to demonstrate that anonymous people also had a past ("their lives are as interesting as yours or mine, even if nobody has written about them"). It was to show that "collectively . . . such men and women are major historical actors". That is the linking thread between these essays, composed over 40 years or so as lectures, reviews or contributions to the journal that Hobsbawm helped to found, Past And Present.

He combines a novelist's narrative power with an unrivalled command of detail and source. The essay on "Political Shoemakers" displays these talents at full stretch. Written with Joan Scott, it sets out to explore how and why shoemakers acquired such a reputation for radicalism.

We start off with shoemakers in the 1848 revolution in Germany, in the Captain Swing upheavals and the Paris Commune. Then comes a breakdown by trade of those arrested for storming the Bastille ("28 shoemakers were exceeded only by the cabinet-makers, joiners and locksmiths"), and the revelation that "the first anarchist ever recorded in a provincial town in Rio Grande do Sul in Brazil was an Italian shoemaker". This alluring fact leads on through shoemakers in the Boston Tea Party, the 19th century anarchist movement in Lyon, the Cato Street Conspiracy and so forth to a dazzling discussion of the social factors — solitude at work, physical handicap, door-to-door calling — which encouraged shoemakers to become agitators.

The best items in this book are sketches of individuals — people whose political personalities fascinated him, such as the bandit Salvatore Guiliano; people he loathed, such as Joe McCarthy's sidekick Roy Cohn; people he revered, such as Billie Holiday. On jazz, he cracks the whip noisily in defence of his own tastes. "Some time in the fifties, American popular music committed parricide. Rock murdered jazz." Murdered? I fancy the phrase, but I'm glad it's not the style of Hobsbawm history.

There's beauty in the detail

Roy Porter

The Smallest of All Persons Mentioned in the Record of Littleness
by Gaby Wood
Profile Books 80pp £3.99

A SHORT story about an even shorter heroine. Eight-year-old Caroline Crachami hit the headlines in 1824 when she was exhibited in fashionable Bond Street — entrance one shilling, another shilling for a touch. Billed as the "Sicilian Fairy", she was around 20 inches tall, and she had an enviable 11-and-a-quarter inch waist. All dolled up, she had been "sat upon a small tea caddy with infinite grace", reported one journalist, "and listened to music with evident pleasure, beating time with her tiny foot".



The Sicilian Fairy: 20 inches tall

Mademoiselle Crachami was a sensation, drawing fashionable crowds as the Elephant Man did 60 years later. William Jordan, writing for the Literary Gazette, was utterly infatuated. "I shall visit her again and again," he gushed, "for she is to me the wonder of wonders".

Not everyone was so smitten. The comic actor and freak-show fan Charles Mathews went to see her on display in Liverpool. She was a "most disgusting little withered creature," reported his wife, "and, what my husband disliked very much in any woman, had a powdery look upon her skin".

According to the exhibition souvenir, she had been born in Palermo, the daughter of an Italian woman. Why was she so stunted? Travelling while pregnant in the baggage-train of the Duke of Wellington's army, her mother had supposedly been "frightened into fits by an accident with a monkey". There was, it seems, some truth in the Italian origins — though Mathews had rumbled that, for all his exotic get-up, the Fairy's "father" or minder was no Sicilian, but an Irishman with a Cork brogue.

After she died in June that year, just before her ninth birthday, over-exposed to gawpers while suffering from a cough, something like the full story came out. Caroline was the daughter of Emmanuel Crachami, alias Lewis Fogle, a Sicilian by birth and now a musician in Dublin. When he had consulted a Dr Gilligan about her health, the physician had got his consent to bring her to London for treatment, exhibiting her to meet the costs.

On hearing of her death, Fogle came to recover her corpse. He found that Gilligan had decamped with the body and struck a deal with the Royal College of Surgeons: in the event of her death, he should sell them her remains for £500, "for the purposes of dissection and the use of the college". The distraught father rushed to Lincoln's Inn Fields, begging to have a last look at his child. "But alas!" reported the Times, "it was too late." Dissection was already well advanced. Her little skeleton is still on show in the Hunterian Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons, together with her tiny slippers, stockings, and death mask.

And now, finally, Caroline Crachami has been commemorated by Gaby Wood in an attractive miniature book that tells her tale. What are we to make of the dark doings of the doctors in this sordid affair? Did she, Gaby Wood wonders, owe her allure to her erotic ambivalence — a baby-like near adolescent, packaged as that archetypal male fantasy, the living doll?



Marilyn Monroe in Henri Cartier-Bresson's Magnum Cinema: Photographs From 50 Years Of Movie-making (Phaidon, £19.95)

Stars in the making

Gerald Kaufman

The Genius of the System: Hollywood Film Making in the Studio Era
by Thomas Schatz
Faber 514pp £14.99

"WE HAD faces then," said Gloria Swanson, in the role of Norma Desmond in Billy Wilder's rancid Tinseltown fable, Sunset Boulevard. of the Hollywood studios' golden age; but she could just as easily have been talking about the studios themselves.

Today, though many of the studios survive in name and are often housed in the same premises, they are simply packaging organisations without individual identities. Half a century ago the output of each of them was so distinctive that it could be detected even without the logos that introduced their films.

Paramount's famous gateway entrance (in actuality, on a tiny side-street) to a studio celebrated for the shimmering sheen of its celluloid images was shown in Sunset Boulevard itself. MGM, epitome of opulent extravagance, was noted — says Professor Schatz in this comprehensive and voraciously readable study of the golden age — for its "polish, poise and glamour". Warner Brothers, stuck away in Burbank and for a long time its rivals' poor relation, made its first real money with 19 films featuring the canine star Rin Tin Tin and went on, *faute de mieux*, to specialise in gritty, gloomily lit gangster pictures.

The movie-makers of this period, mainly Jews originating from east- about what they were up to. MGM's head of production, Irving Thalberg, said of the stage drama that inspired Grand Hotel, the all-star epitome of golden-age chic: "This is a lousy play that succeeded only because it was lousy."

Unlike today's films, which can take years to shoot and edit and cost almost laughably large sums, most of Hollywood's mainstream output during the few decades that spanned what Schatz calls its "glory years" was produced swiftly and cheaply. Universal's Son Of Frankenstein was shot in 27 days, with two directors on alternate shifts, and was on public release five days after it was completed.

Hollywood's Jewish bosses took few avoidable risks. Schatz describes how they avoided references in their movies to their own co-religionists. Warners, regarded as the most adventurous of the major studios, made a film, The Life Of Emile Zola, based on the Dreyfus case (which was about nothing if it was not about anti-Semitism) "without [as Schatz points out] the word Jew ever being uttered".

Controversies were played down; names were made up. David Selznick, perhaps the golden age's most manic figure, turned his mistress, Phyllis Walker, into his star, Jennifer Jones. Selznick was particularly discriminating in the deploy- Veronica Lake as "the best synthetic name in pictures".

Hollywood's golden age could be eccentric and excessive. Its value judgments could be bizarre: Schatz cites one story editor as listing Jane Eyre — a candidate for filming — as "the sixth greatest novel in the English language". Yet, out of this confusion and occasional idiocy, emerged films (including Jane Eyre) which started out as formulaic products and ended up as revered classics. Schatz is right to say that the achievements of the studio system "still stood among the greatest cultural accomplishments". Will the same be said, 50 years from now, about Predator and The Terminator?

A report of the exorcism

Matt Seaton

My Brother
by Jamaica Kincaid
Vintage 200pp £6.99

JAMAICA Kincaid writes about her family the way a really fine foreign correspondent might report on a far-flung, war-torn country — with that same contrapuntal tone of ruthlessly cool detachment and passionately angry engagement. It is at once impressive and slightly scary to behold, because one can see in an instant the enormous and costly effort of will that Kincaid has summoned up to transcend that family, to escape Antigua and become a writer.

"Jamaica Kincaid" is a *nom de plume*, but it is her entire identity. The business of writing for her is not merely a profession or a pastime; it is an urgent act of self-making. In one, unexpected and rather moving passage towards the end of this book, she tells how everything she has written was written for one reader only — William Shawn, for much of the post-war era editor of the New Yorker.

Even now, several years after his death, Kincaid imagines that what she writes will be for Shawn's eyes first of all. What you should know is that "Mr Shawn", as he was universally known, became her father-in-law — a fact I mention not because the notion of nepotism is in any way relevant, but simply to illustrate the point that her self-fashioning as a writer is intimately bound up with the need to flee her original family and create her own.

That first, biological family nevertheless returns to haunt both her imagination and her life. This book is about the death of her brother, Devon Drew, and the manner of his dying. Devon was the baby brother she did not see for more than 20 years, leaving him as a toddler when she quit home at 16, returning only when his Aids-related illness made her help — as an American citizen with money for, and access to, drugs such as AZT — his lifeline.

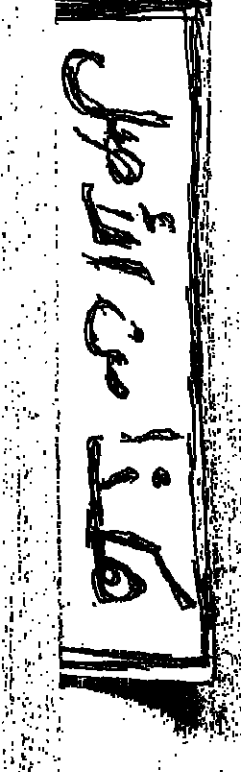
The encounter with her brother, a weed-smoking, ostensibly womanising convert to Rastafarianism, drags her back into the bosom of the family she ran away from, and in particular the monstrously domineering matriarch at the centre of it, from whose baleful influence none of Kincaid's three brothers has succeeded in escaping.

One — not Devon, who was actually his mother's spoiled favourite after a fashion — lives virtually under the same roof but has not spoken to her for years and, with third parties, will only refer to her grudgingly as "Mrs Drew".

We have, of course, no external corroboration to authenticate Kincaid's portrait of her family, but in any case this is not a work of confessional journalism; it is too crafted, too self-consciously literary for that. If the compulsion to write about her family is a kind of haunting, then the act of doing so is a type of exorcism — something far more ritualistic, less utilitarian than writing-as-therapy.

That faint sense of the ceremonial chimes with the deliberateness in Kincaid's style: every word she writes feels as though it has been weighed in the palm to test its shape, density and texture. Often, in My Brother, there is a feeling for language as an artist's material: the author loves to use repetition of words and phrases, just as an oil painter would build up colour and form with brushstroke upon brushstroke.

At times the result is almost too mannered, but then there are sentences that make one flinch in their harsh, direct honesty. Words, in Kincaid's hands, are as palpable — and as potentially pain-inflicting — as sticks and stones. Less a fraternal lament than a meditation on the profound ambivalence that siblings, parents and children feel for one another — at its most intense, a pure but inseparable dualism of love and hate — My Brother is memorable, sad and true.





Secret life of agent Wordsworth

Andrew Motion

The Hidden Wordsworth: Poet, Lover, Rebel, Spy
by Kenneth R Johnston
Norton 960pp £30

WHEN Wordsworth was at school in Hawkshead during the 1780s, the day came when he was given "some credit" by "his Master for some English Verses. A bigger boy took him by the arm and led him off into the fields, & when he had got him quite apart, gravely said to him, 'I say, Bill, when thoo writes verse dost thoo invoke t'Muse?'"

In this enormous and very impressive biography of the young Wordsworth (it takes us from his birth in 1770 to 1807 and the completion — almost — of the Prelude), Kenneth Johnston makes all manner of original discoveries. But his search for the impetus of the poetry — "t'Muse" — has a properly familiar feel to it.

His Wordsworth is obsessed by ideas of self-creation — someone who sees "humanity" in landscape as well as its figures, who requires that this humanity be tested against his own experience, and who understands that personal revelations have a general value. This is the justification of the egotistical sublime: to create a poetic self that is also exemplary.

Johnston unravels this theme with enough subtlety to make it feel fresh, and combines it with another equally familiar notion. In Wordsworth's lifetime, some readers complained "he had as much imagination as a pint pot" (the phrase is Shelley's); but it is nearer the truth to say "he was a poet with remarkably low powers of invention".

Wordsworth himself suspected this, and made good the deficiency by soliciting other people's stories — even stopping travellers on the road to hear them talk. This meant his inward, introspective momentum had a counterweight in the outside world, where people speak in the "language such as men do use". It generates in his best work a feeling of simultaneous depth and spread that is unparalleled in English poetry.

Even if Johnston had no actual discoveries to promote, his readings of the poems would be a good enough reason to buy this book. As it is — sometimes with great daring, always with good sense — he directs us towards areas of his subject's life that help us to see the man in a new light. And its rewards are just as startling — perhaps even more so, since Wordsworth himself had so much success, in the last part of his life, disguising the person he had once been.

Johnston arrives at his first big restoration-moment by a slow and scenic route. The death of Wordsworth's parents, the complication of the Lowther inheritance, the notoriously "stiff, moody and violent temper" of his childhood: all these things are well known, and only really take on a tinge of strangeness when Wordsworth arrives at Cambridge in 1787. Here Johnston starts to demolish the received impression of Wordsworth as a sexless young fogey, and to establish the significance of his decision not to take his degree. "Few things in the [early] life are more romantic," he says — allowing, a few pages later, when Wordsworth leaves for a walking tour of France that: "With this act of disobedience, his career as a Romantic poet may be said to have begun."

This first adventure into Europe, which became a crash course in left-wing politics and love (Annette Vallon), is described in tremendous detail by Johnston. At this time of his life Wordsworth was living in the teeth of fierce dangers, at home and abroad, was deeply in love with someone he could not reach, and was desperate to establish a poetics that would do justice to these things as well as himself.

Did Wordsworth take a hitherto unnoticed trip back to France in the autumn of 1793? Johnston thinks so, and tracks him ingeniously to Annette and their infant daughter Caroline, always allowing for the possibility that his ideas are just a "theory". No doubt scholars will quarrel about some of Johnston's conjectures, but even if he is proved wrong the long perspective he has given to familiar things is very valuable.

The same thing even applies to his next Big Idea — the proposition that on a trip into southern Germany in the spring of 1799 Wordsworth worked as a spy for the British government. To have done so would have been to take the first step away from his early allegiances towards the severely Tory position of his later years. More than that, it registers his need to make himself independent of Coleridge, and of his own sister Dorothy. "The creation of the Poet in Germany," says Johnston, "with a slightly anxious-sounding neatness, was also a declaration of dependence on the coffers of the nation-state that he now, after a terrible year of evolution and self-exile, said 'he had learned to know the value of.'"

Dorothy has played a gradually growing role in Wordsworth's journey to this point, and for much of the later part of the book she is dominant. With the Lyrical Ballads written, his [illegible] stalled or subverted, his feeling for Annette warm but boxed, and his friendship with Coleridge at sixes and sevens, Wordsworth and his sister settled in Town End (aka Dove Cottage), and the torrent of his greatest poetry began to flow. It would be tempting to interpret this as a time when adventure gave way to recollection, strife to peace. In fact the extremely complex demands that Wordsworth and Dorothy made on each other, and their incestuous intensities (which Johnston tackles with tact and candour) meant that the strains of a more public life were in some senses recreated in intimate terms.

Johnston ends his story by giving an impression of stern self-control and a sense of Wordsworth's middle-aged tutorial tone rising to drown his younger cadences. It makes us glad to be spared the next 40-odd years, for all the poetry that was still to come. In his early days Wordsworth coincided with the best of his times in exceptional ways. As we read his work, we watch the sun come up over a world we know as ours: self-conscious and modern. A less patient and capacious book than this would not have done him justice; Johnston has cleared away the accretions of nearly 200 years and given us the Wordsworth who in that painful dawn felt it was bliss to be alive.

If you would like to order this book at the special price of £28 contact CultureShop (see below)

Erotic encounters of a monogamous libertine

John King

The Notebooks of Don Rigoberto
by Mario Vargas Llosa
translated by Edith Grossman
Faber 259pp £16.99

IN THE December 4, 1997, issue of the New York Review of Books, John Updike published an essay on the artist Egon Schiele, under the title — a gloss on Freud — "Can Genitals be Beautiful?". It is an article that would have attracted the attention of Don Rigoberto, Mario Vargas Llosa's most recent fictional hero, for several reasons.

Don Rigoberto, in his fastidiously organised Lima library full of precisely 4,000 books and 100 pictures, dedicates his free time away from his boring job as an insurance executive to the pursuit of beauty through the erotic arts. His notebooks are full of quotations, commentaries, fantasies and letters that he never sends. He reads Updike, calling him a "brilliant writer", but adding that "everything brilliant is ugly". He shares Updike's interest in the drawings of Schiele, but does not realise that his young son, the angelic/diabolic Alfonso (Fonchito) has a growing obsession with the Viennese artist's life and work, imagining himself to be Schiele's Peruvian reincarnation.

This is the second time that the fictional triangle of Don Rigoberto, his estranged wife Doña Lucrecia and Fonchito has appeared in a Vargas Llosa novel. Published a decade earlier, In Praise Of The Stepmother introduced us to the marital bliss of Don Rigoberto and his second wife, which was invaded by the mutual attraction of stepmother and stepson, the young cherub Fonchito. The resulting sexual encounter tests the limits of Don Rigoberto's libertine imagination and the couple move apart.

In the 10 years it took to write the much more ambitious sequel, Vargas Llosa ran for the presidency in Peru, and in the electoral campaign the opposition parties would quote selectively from In Praise Of The Stepmother, asking why a writer with such a morally degenerate imagination should seek to become the father of the nation. He then wrote a massive autobiography, an intensely serious novel about terrorism in Peru, an academic study of the Peruvian writer José María Arguedas, as well as keeping up a regular column for El País in Spain. Yet it was clear that Don Rigoberto had more fantasies to express, and in The Notebooks his imagination — or is it his reality? — is given the most diverse expression.

As we have learnt to expect from a Vargas Llosa novel, there is no one single story line. Four narratives are initially counterpoised and then begin to blend, effortlessly, in nine chapters and an epilogue. In one, Doña Lucrecia begins to receive visits from her stepson. She is still fascinated by him, but wary of his motives. He wants his parents back together and offers to act as a go-between, but he also wants to talk about his work at art school and his fascination with Schiele.

As we have learnt to expect from a Vargas Llosa novel, there is no one single story line

The boy seems to know everything: the father's death from syphilis and Schiele's own fear of death or madness associated with sex, his provocative drawings of adolescent or prepubescent girls, including his own sister, his explicit sketches of his lover, his wife and her sister, his imprisonment for obscenity, his anguished self-portraits, even down to the detail of small Bolivian and Peruvian dolls painted into the clothes of one of his most famous portraits of Friederike Beer. The boy-child is also anxious to use his stepmother and her maid to re-enact some of the poses in his own illustrated books.

The second narrative strand is a series of unsent letters penned by Don Rigoberto where he lets off steam against collective endeavour, from the Rotarians to sportsmen, ecologists and animal rights supporters, and defends his own individual, erotic and aesthetic freedoms while abusing the pornography and exploitation of magazines such as Playboy.

The third strand finds Don Rigoberto in the midst of erotic encounters with his wife or of stories told to him by his wife. At first, the boundaries between reality and imagination are deliberately blurred; it is only later that the episodes are revealed as increasingly desperate fantasies to fill the lonely hours of solitude, for Don Rigoberto has always been a monogamous libertine. In these, Don Rigoberto blends every memory and every visual and written aid at his disposal, in his collection that ranges from high art and literature to Mexican melodrama, from Calderón de la Barca to an 18th-century foot fetishist.

Finally, there is a series of anonymous lovers' letters. Will there be a reconciliation, will fantasy ever touch reality? Vargas Llosa is enjoying himself and has produced his funniest and most relaxed novel since Aunt Julia And The Scriptwriter (1977). But he has a number of sharp points to make about art and eroticism, fantasies, fiction and reality, and the craft and architecture of fiction itself.

In answer to the question "Can genitals be beautiful?", Don Rigoberto, and perhaps Vargas Llosa, would surely answer, it depends on who is creating, on who is seeing.

If you would like to order this book at the special price of £14 contact CultureShop (see below)

Football World Cup

Triumph of Dutch courage

Richard Williams in Marseille

THE DUTCH got their revenge for 1978 last Saturday and, even though none of their players was more than 10 years old when Daniel Passarella lifted the World Cup in Buenos Aires as Argentina's captain, don't think they didn't feel the significance in their bones. After beating the Passarella-coached Argentina 2-1 in a tense and turbulent quarter-final game, Guus Hiddink's team will fear no one.

Not that fear is ever much of a factor in Dutch football, as they showed by the way they matched the South Americans in every department in the Stade Vélodrome, not least in a physical battle that rivalled the tactical struggle for primacy.

A game of three fine goals by Patrick Kluivert, Carlos Lopez and Dennis Berkgamp, three resounding shots that came back off the woodwork and 90 minutes of unselfish effort by every player on the pitch also contained incidents of [illegible]-meaning ugliness.

Arthur Numan was dismissed for collecting a second yellow card for a foul on Diego Simeone, while Ariel Ortega, the most recklessly [illegible] ball-player in the entire [illegible] World Cup, saw red for an apparent head-butt on Dutch keeper Edwin van der Sar.

It was Bergkamp whose cool brilliance enabled Holland to take the lead. Wim Jonk had already hit the post with a long-range drive when Bergkamp met Ronald De Boer's lofted pass in the 12th minute with a cushioned header that invited Kluivert to clip a shot across Carlos Roa.

Three minutes later, just after Numan had attracted a caution for tripping Ortega, Lopez raced through the dispersed Dutch defence to wrongfoot Van der Sar and steered the ball between the goalkeeper's legs for the equaliser.

Ortega hit the woodwork from [illegible] yards just before half-time and [illegible] minutes into the second period Gabriel Batistuta narrowly failed to register his sixth goal of the competition when he ran on to Juan Veron's perfect pass, cut inside Frank de Boer and smashed the ball against a post with Van der Sar helpless.

During the 12 minutes in which they enjoyed numerical superiority Argentina showed the same curious reluctance to launch an all-out assault as they had against the depleted England. But with both sides down to 10 men, and only 30 seconds left on the clock, Bergkamp delivered the *coup de grâce* when he controlled a long diagonal pass from Frank de Boer with the most delicate of touches, turned inside Roberto Ayala and used the outside of his right foot to strike the ball across Roa and inside the far angle.

In the other quarter finals last week, at the Stade de France in Saint-Denis the agonising manner of France's 4-3 victory on penalties did nothing to obscure the fact that their adventurous football had deserved to prevail over Italy's caution.

Only after Cesare Maldini, Italy's coach, had replaced the mystifyingly ineffective Alessandro Del Piero with the experience and guile of Roberto Baggio did Italy begin to construct a reply to France's constant attacks. But in a game of only two clear chances, one to each side, the outcome was destined to be settled by a shootout. Fate reserved its cruellest card for Luigi Di Biagio, the Roma midfield player, who side-footed his kick against the crossbar and sank to the turf in the knowledge that he had cost his country the chance of their fourth trophy.

Italy came closest to scoring in the 101st minute when Demetrio Albertini lifted a gentle ball from the touchline to the near post, where Baggio met the ball with a delicate volley that curled across the goal and just wide of the far post.

It was the match's most beautiful moment, and would have made a fitting winner. But France almost got one of their own late in extra time, when Youri Djorkaeff raced to meet Thierry Henry's diagonal pass but found Gianluca Pagliuca in his way.

In Nantes, Denmark took the lead after 90 seconds and recovered from two first-half strikes by Bebeto and Rivaldo to draw level at 2-2 early in the second half, with a shot from Brian Laudrup. But a second goal for Rivaldo, scored on the hour, turned out to be the winner even though the outcome remained in doubt until the end, such was the strength of Denmark's refusal to admit defeat.

Nein, nein, nein . . . German players protest to no avail after Norwegian referee Rune Pedersen sent off Christian Wörns in their quarter-final clash against Croatia in Lyon. The Croats redrew the football map by beating Germany 3-0 with goals from Robert Jarni, Goran Vlaovic and Davor Suker PHOTO: ROSS KINNAIRD

Hoddle's men pay penalty

ENGLAND'S World Cup campaign ended in the cruellest and most familiar way in the second round, with the team beaten on penalties by Argentina having ground out a 2-2 draw after playing for most of the second half with only 10 men, *writes John Duncan*.

It was a heroic performance by England. But when David Batty missed the fifth penalty kick England were — as in Italia 90 and Euro 96 — out of a major tournament without actually losing in open play.

All the four goals came in the first half, including a brilliant solo effort by young Michael Owen. David Beckham was sent off a minute into the second half after a petulant retaliation when, lying prone after being fouled, he kicked out at the Argentine captain, Diego Simeone, with the referee only yards away.

"The sending off cost us dear," said the England coach, Glenn Hoddle, after the match. "We defended like lions and we are absolutely distraught to have lost it like that."

Even with 10 men England scored what looked like a winner late in the second half, only for Sol Campbell's header to be disallowed because of a foul by Alan Shearer on the Argentine goalkeeper.

In the first penalty shootout of the competition, England lost 4-3. Paul Ince was the first Englishman to fluff his kick.

Cricket Third Test

England pass test of endurance

Mike Selvey at Old Trafford

FROM the most unpromising of beginnings, a memorable Test was played out at Old Trafford on Monday — perhaps even one of the greatest. Asked to bat out all but 35 minutes of the last two days to save the match, England drew with South Africa by the skin of their teeth thanks to a rearguard action to remain 1-0 down in the series.

In the end, for all the resilience shown by those who had preceded him, England depended on the ability of Angus Fraser, a No 11 of no pretensions, to play six deliveries from Allan Donald, indisputably one of history's finest fast bowlers.

Set a first-innings target of 552 by South Africa, England had responded with an unimpressive 183, which meant they had to follow on. By Monday they had reached 369 for nine, wiping out the deficit so that at least South Africa would have to bat again and score one run to win should the last wicket fall.

In theory there were four overs of the day remaining but in fact Donald had just six balls to set up the victory, as any portion of an over counts as a whole one and two overs would go for the changeover of innings. So it was that Donald, having sweated blood for 39 overs to take six of the wickets, had to conjure one last scalp. After failing in his first five deliveries he turned at the end of his run, and wiped his hands before sliding in one final time. The yorker, fast and with inswing, homed in to Fraser's leg, striking him on the pad. The impassioned appeal for lbw was rejected by the New Zealander Doug Cowie.

And that, according to the laws, should have been the end and match drawn, but in the confusion one more over was bowled — though even if Fraser's partner Robert Croft had been out to the first ball, it would have counted as a full over and left no allotment for South Africa to change over.

The first two days will be remembered for Gary Kirsten's 210, achieved over the space of 652 minutes, the longest innings played between the two countries; and Jacques Kallis's 132.

South Africa: 552 for 5 dec; England: 183 and 369 for 9 Match drawn

Sports Diary Shiv Sharma

New Zealander who dares wins 500cc race

SIMON Crafar of New Zealand easily beat the current 500cc motorcycling world champion, Australia's Michael Doohan, to win the British Grand Prix at Donington Park — and record his maiden victory. Crafar, in his first season of grand prix racing, had dropped to third place at the start after moving away in pole position, but on lap five the Yamaha rider went into the lead with a daring move.

"I certainly did not expect it to go the way it did because at the start I was ready to race hard all the way. I still can't really believe it. It's going to take a few days for the result to sink in," said an elated Crafar.

THE Cable & Wireless Adventurer, a 35-metre British powerboat based on a 19th century design, set a new round-the-world record when it arrived back in Gibraltar after circumnavigating the globe in 74 days, 20 hours and 58 minutes, thus beating Jules Verne's fictional target. The previous record of 83 days, nine hours and 54 minutes was set in 1960 by the USS Triton.

LINFORD CHRISTIE, Britain's former Olympic gold medallist and one of the finest sprinters of his generation, won a pyrrhic victory in the High Court in London when a jury agreed that he had been libelled by journalist John McVicar, once the country's most wanted man.

The 38-year-old Christie said he was pleased with the $70,000 damages awarded to him for allegations of drug-taking. But the case has proved a financial disaster for him. Under the terms of a complicated deal, he will have to pay $190,000 in legal fees and faces the prospect of not recouping his own costs of about $250,000.

DAVID CARTER won the Murphy's Irish Golf Open in dramatic fashion at Druid's Glen, beating the European No 1 Colin Montgomerie at the first hole of a sudden-death play-off after finishing on a six-under-par 278. Carter, from Derbyshire, appeared to have thrown away the chance of a maiden European tour victory when he lost a four-shot lead with six holes to play. But after going into the water at the last — a hole he needed to par to win the $265,000 first prize — he sank a 20-foot bogey putt to force the play-off with a 71.

WALTER SMITH is Everton's new manager. He left Rangers at the end of last season after guiding the Scottish club to nine Premier Division titles in a row. Smith replaces Howard Kendall, who parted company with the Merseyside club last month. Smith, who signed a three-year contract worth around $2.5 million, became the fourth manager at Goodison Park in chairman Peter Johnson's four-year reign, following in the footsteps of Mike Walker, Joe Royle and Kendall.

In other moves, Sheffield United appointed Steve Bruce as their player-manager for three years. The former Manchester United captain will play for the first year, then restrict himself to management.

John Hollins the former Chelsea and England player, resigned as assistant manager at Queen's Park Rangers to become Swansea City's ninth manager in two years.

Ricardo Gardner, the Jamaica midfielder, became the first of the home-grown Reggae Boyz to move to Europe when he joined Bolton Wanderers for $1.6 million.